

STATINTL

FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM Senate Watergate Hearings STATION WTOP TV
CBS Network

DATE August 2, 1973 9:30 A.M. CITY Washington, D.C.

TESTIMONY OF RICHARD HELMS, AUGUST 2, 1973

ANNOUNCER: From CBS News, Washington -- live coverage of the Watergate hearings conducted by the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities.

To ensure live nationwide coverage of the hearings, the three national networks are experimenting with a rotation system under which CBS has responsibility for today's broadcast. ABC will broadcast the day's complete hearings Monday.

Now here are CBS News correspondents Nelson Benton and George Herman.

GEORGE HERMAN: Good morning from Washington. You're looking at the Senate committee hearing room on our screen. So far the senators are not in.

The first witness today is supposed to be Richard McGarran Helms. He was the director of the CIA from 1966 to 1973. He's currently the ambassador to Iran. And that's one of the reasons that he wanted to be on rather rapidly: he's -- he came to Washington with the Shah of Iran for his visit, but he's due back in Iran to fulfill his duties there as amba- [Because of network technical difficulty at this point only static was broadcast for a minute or two]...

NELSON BENTON: ...deputy director of the CIA will follow Helms. It's expected that Mr. Helms' testimony may not take all of today.

CBS News' coverage of the Watergate hearings live from Washington will continue in a moment.

*

*

*

BENTON: Richard Helms has arrived in the Senate Caucus Room now. The full committee has not yet arrived. And Daniel Schorr has, though.

2

Dan?

DANIEL SCHORR: Yes, Nelson. I think we can outline now the three areas of interest that this committee has in Richard Helms. And they deal with developments in 1970, 1971, and 1972.

In 1970, as has been brought out before this committee, there was that famous plan of Tom Charles Huston to set up that plan for surveillance and intelligence, the plan that was stoutly opposed by the then Director of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover. But according to Huston the only one who was cooperating was Mr. Helms of the CIA. If that was true, he was alone in the intelligence community, apparently, in being willing to go along with that plan. If untrue, he'll have the chance to deny it today. But even though that plan didn't go through, they did set up an intelligence evaluation committee in which the CIA did cooperate. And Senator Ervin, for one, and Senator Weicker, for two, believe very strongly that the CIA's cooperation in that committee in itself violated the law which bars the CIA from engaging in any domestic intelligence in any form.

Then there comes 1971, when it has been alleged, and so far without very great contradiction, that Mr. Helms was the one who provided for cooperating on the so-called "psychological profile" of Daniel Ellsberg and may have been the one to authorize helping Howard Hunt in getting the equipment he needed that was used in the Ellsberg break-in. And he's going to be asked about that.

And then finally and climactically in 1972 the question of to what extent the CIA was used in an attempt to cover up the whole Watergate burglary, to what extent legitimately and to what extent not. And that's a very long and tangled story that has been outlined before other committees and will be again brought fully here. The main issue was that it was clear that on June 22nd, less than a week after the break-in, Helms was called to the White House along with his deputy, that there were talks about possible CIA involvement, were they responsible for the people or could they have been responsible for Watergate itself. It eventually emerged after several days that the CIA disowned and disclaimed any responsibility, also disclaimed the idea that any other covert operations of the CIA might inadvertently be surfaced as a result of an FBI inquiry. But there is an enormous tangle about that week when there were contacts between Helms and the White House and between General Walters, his deputy, and General Cushman, his deputy at the time, all of which will play a very important part in today's sessions.

BENTON: Dan, I suppose it's likely that the committee will indeed go into the full chronological range with Helms, since he'd like to get back to his post in Iran, rather than dealing just with the Watergate as -- despite the committee's desire to get away as soon as possible.

3

SCHORR: Yes, he -- I'm sure he would like to get away. And I'm sure he would not like to be here. This is a matter of intense embarrassment to him.

And while I'm at it, let me mention one thing in which he played apparently a part that will be greeted by the committee. In 1970, when the White House was very anxious to show -- in 1971 the Communist -- that the White House was very anxious to show, as it was brought out yesterday in testimony, that there might be Communist money coming in in support of demonstrations and campus violence, the CIA made a study and provided a study to the White House which said there was really no proof of any such thing and that it was a terribly wild idea. That report by Helms and the CIA was not greeted very enthusiastically by those in the White House who wanted some establishment -- to establish some connection between Communists, Cuba, Algeria and what was going on in this country. And it has long been said that it was his failure to respond to what the White House wanted that resulted in his being eased out as Director of the CIA and sent off to Iran.

HERMAN: One of the problems, I suspect, both Nelson and Dan, that the Senate is going to face this morning is that some of the testimony that Mr. Helms gave, which directly contradicts some of Mr. Huston's memos and some of the other statements, was given in executive session. It is in effect secret testimony, although actually, if the truth be known, it is known to everybody on the Hill, it has been -- it has been printed in newspapers, it has been said on the air; but it is, in theory at least, secret testimony. For example, Senator Clifford Case asked Mr. Helms last February, I think it was, February 7th, about this whole matter, and Helms told Senator Case that he doesn't recall whether the CIA was ever asked to be involved in looking into domestic subversion and the -- the peace movement and so forth. "But," he says, "we were not involved, because it seemed to me it would violate our charter." Well, now, all of that was given in secret testimony. Also, shortly after that Mr. Helms left and went back -- after -- at least after the Huston memos came out, Mr. Helms left to go back to Iran, and this is the first time the senators have had a look at him. So they're going to have to balance their curiosity against what is at least theoretically secret testimony.

And we'll have to hold off our curiosity for a few moments. CBS News coverage of the Watergate hearing live from Washington will resume in a few moments.

*

*

*

HERMAN: Senator Ervin is on his way in, as you can see. I'll just remind you that the witness is Richard Helms, former Director of the CIA, now the ambassador to Iran, and that he is supposedly -- originally was scheduled to be on the witness stand

4

for approximately half a day, like the other CIA men involved here, Nelson, but so far the record of having any witness on for only half a day has not been too good.

Senator Ervin has taken his place.

BENTON: Senator Ervin and vice chairman Baker arrived after. I wonder if they had any -- well, we're find out: there's the gavel.

SENATOR SAM ERVIN: The committee will come to order. I am constrained to make some remarks concerning a member of this committee, Senator Danny Inouye of Hawaii. Senator Inouye is a -- an American, native-born American, of Japanese ancestry. I don't know a finer American. He showed his devotion to our country by fighting under its flag not only for the liberty of our country but for the liberty of the free world in the Second World War. He suffered severe wounds which necessitated the amputation of his right arm. He was decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism in action with an armed enemy of the United States. And I -- and he's proved himself in the Sen- -- in latter days as one of the most dedicated Americans this country has ever known. And I feel that events of yesterday make it appropriate for me to make these remarks concerning a member of this committee who's proved himself one of the most gallant of all Americans in this history of this Republic.

SENATOR HOWARD BAKER: Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR ERVIN: Senator Baker.

SENATOR BAKER: Mr. Chairman, may I say that I've known Danny Inouye since I've been in the Senate. And there's no man I think is more loyal and dedicated to his country. I don't know of anyone on this committee who's made a greater contribution to its efforts than Senator Inouye. I have a great affection for him, as well as a great admiration for him. We are in a tension-filled atmosphere, and it's unfortunate that things of this sort occur. I think a mark of Senator Inouye's greatness is that I am sure it will not affect his further consideration of the matters that are brought to our attention. I am sorry that the events of the last several days have occurred. I hope and think that it will not affect the objectivity and the efficiency and the effectiveness of this committee. And I commend you, Mr. Chairman, for bringing that matter to the attention of the official record. And I believe now it's behind us and we can get on with the business at hand.

Thank you, sir.

HERMAN: They're talking about a reference to a remark by John Wilson yesterday, the lawyer, to Senator Inouye as "the little Jap."

SAMUEL DASH: Former Director Helms.

SENATOR ERVIN: Will you stand up and raise your right hand? Do you swear that the evidence that you shall give to the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

RICHARD HELMS: I do.

SENATOR ERVIN: You might state your full name and present address for the purposes of the record.

HELMS: My name is Richard Helms. And I'm presently Ambassador to Iran, resident in Teheran.

SENATOR BAKER: Mr. Chairman, could we stand just for a moment?

SENATOR ERVIN: Yes.

SENATOR BAKER: Let's move these mikes.

HERMAN: I must say, Nelson Benton, that Ambassador Helms does not look like 60 years old.

BENTON: He certainly doesn't. He's led a rather rigorous life, I suppose, in the kind of operation he's been in.

We don't know what this is all about. And the mikes were turned around so that -- that Chairman Ervin and Vice Chairman Baker could make their decisions with some privacy.

HERMAN: Let me just amplify while we have this moment a little bit on my remarks. They were talking a few moments ago about Senator Inouye, and you may have noticed that he was absent at the time. The reference was to a remark by lawyer John J. Wilson yesterday, the lawyer to both Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Ehrlichman, that he was not worried so much by the questions asked by Senator Weicker, he was only worried about "the little Jap," and by that he meant the questions asked by Senator Inouye. And he was questioned about -- Wilson was questioned about that remark later and he said, "Well, I wouldn't mind being called 'the little American.'" I don't see why he should mind being called 'the little Jap.'" And there were some questions asked as to whether he didn't think that he made perhaps a racial slur, and he rather vigorously denied that. Well, that's what they were talking about when they gave the praise of Senator Inouye as an American of Japanese ancestry.

DASH: [Words unintelligible as Herman finishes his remarks] ...Ambassador Helms. And, Mr. Chairman, the -- Ambassador Helms will be questioned initially by Mr. David Dorson [?], assistant

6

chief counsel.

SENATOR BAKER: Was he sworn? Okay.

DAVID DORSON: Ambassador Helms, how long have you held your present position?

HELMS: I've been in Teheran since the middle of March of this year.

DORSON: And prior to that were you the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency?

HELM: Yes, I was the Director of Central Intelligence, was my title.

DORSON: How long were you Director?

HELMS: Approximately six and a half years. I believe the -- I was sworn in on June the 30th, 1966; and I left office when Mr. Schlesinger became Director on the 2nd of February, 1973.

DORSON: How long did you -- how long have you been -- or were you with the Central Intelligence Agency?

HELMS: From the day its doors opened in 1947.

DORSON: Did you learn, Ambassador Helms, in July of 1971 that E. Howard Hunt had been made a consultant to the White House?

HELMS: I was informed of this.

DORSON: And do you recall how you were informed?

HELMS: Not specifically any longer. I just -- I remember being told that he had gone for the White House. But precisely under what circumstances I was told and on what specific date I do not recall.

DORSON: Did you have a conversation with General Cushman concerning Howard Hunt in the summer of 1971?

HELMS: Yes. I recall that General Cushman informed me that he had authorized giving to Howard Hunt a tape recorder and a camera. And I asked for what purpose. And he said he wanted to conduct a one-time interview and that he'd been properly authenticated by the White House and that they -- that he was working at their behest.

DORSON: How long have you known Howard Hunt?

HELMS: Well, I've known him over the years when he worked

7

for the agency.

DORSON: And do you recall approximately how long he worked for the agency?

HELMS: He must have worked for almost, oh, somewhere over 15 years anyway.

DORSON: And what was General Cushman's position at that time?

HELMS: In July of '71?

DORSON: That's correct.

HELMS: He was the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence.

DORSON: To your knowledge, was the tape recorder and the camera given to Mr. Hunt?

HELMS: I was informed that it was, and my preoccupation at the time was to find out whether this was -- these were normal pieces of equipment, and by normal I mean simply available in any store in downtown Washington that carried this kind of equipment, or whether there was something tricky about them, and I was assured they were perfectly routine and straightforward pieces of equipment. I might say parenthetically that within the last couple of days, in talking with some of the gentlemen of Special Prosecutor Cox's office, there was some memorandum there about a clandestine camera having been given to Howard Hunt. I frankly, sir, don't know what a clandestine camera is. A camera takes pictures or it doesn't. That's all it does.

DORSON: Well, could you describe the camera a little bit more, Ambassador?

HELMS: I've never seen it.

DORSON: Do you know whether it was a camera that was concealed in some way?

HELMS: I've been told it was put in a tobacco pouch -- carried in a tobacco pouch.

DORSON: Were you advised of any further requests by Mr. Hunt for assistance?

HELMS: Subsequent to this conversation of which I have just been speaking, I learned, I believe in a memorandum, that Mr. Hunt had asked to have the secretary who was stationed with the CIA in Paris brought back from Paris and assigned to him in the White House. He also wanted this to be done secretly, and he didn't want anybody to know about it. That, to me, was unacceptable.

able. I saw no reason for this. It seemed to me that the agency was being used. It was being asked to have somebody brought back from Paris and assigned to a man doing unidentified chores at the White House, so I got ahold of General Cushman and told him that I thought this was totally unacceptable and I wouldn't stand for it. I don't recall whether it was then or a few days later, but at some point, the various additional requests which Hunt was making of the agency seemed to me totally unacceptable, and I asked General Cushman to call Mr. Ehrlichman and tell him that we just weren't going to do this anymore.

DORSON: Ambassador Helms, I'm advised there is some trouble hearing you to the rear of the room. Perhaps if you could bring the microphone a little bit closer to you.

HELMS: This seems to be the story of my life in Senate committees. I don't know whether I don't raise my voice high enough or what, but maybe I'm not speaking into the microphone.

DORSON: Now, you've indicated that in your conversation with General Cushman that you indicated to Mr. -- General Cushman -- that John Ehrlichman should be called. Why was it that John Ehrlichman was to be called?

HELMS: Because it was my distinct impression that he was the one who had arranged with General Cushman to have Hunt get these pieces of equipment.

DORSON: Ambassador Helms, when for the first time did you learn of the burglary of Dr. Louis Fielding's office, that is, Dr. Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office?

HELMS: I forget which weekend in May it was. I think it was the second weekend of May this year, 1973. I was in Shiraz and I picked up on Sunday an English-language newspaper and saw on the front page of it that there had been a burglary of an office of a psychiatrist in California and that the burglary had been done, it said in the newspaper story, with the assistance of CIA equipment. That was the first time I had ever heard of Dr. Fielding, a burglary or the fact that Dr. Ellsberg had a psychiatrist.

DORSON: Do you know, of your own knowledge, whether any equipment was used in the burglary that was the property of the CIA?

HELMS: I've been assured by members of the agency, and this assurance was given me when I was back here in May testifying before four other congressional committees, that the equipment that was given to Hunt was not used in the burglary of Dr. Ellsberg's office, and actually Mr. Hunt was physically not at the office. He was staked out at Dr. Ellsberg's -- at Dr. Fielding's residence,

and that since he wasn't given any burglary equipment by the agency, I've always wondered how it was that he used that equipment in the break-in. So, this is one of the things that seems to have been perpetuated as one of the myths around here, that he somehow got burglary equipment from the agency which helped him break into places, and I'm not aware of any burglary equipment he ever got from the agency.

DORSON: Ambassador Helms, during the summer of 1971, did you learn of a request by a member of the White House staff for the Central Intelligence Agency to do a psychological or psychiatric profile of Dr. Ellsberg?

HELMS: Yes, I was familiar with this request. Some time before this, Mr. David Young, who was one of the assistants at the White House, had originally been on Dr. Kissinger's staff, informed me that he was being transferred to Mr. Ehrlichman's staff. In other words, he was going to work for Mr. Ehrlichman and that he'd been given some duties in connection with general security procedures in the government classification of documents, investigation of leaks, and a clutch of other such matters. Subsequent to that, he called me and said that he wanted to get into these things. He wanted to find out how the agency and the intelligence community handled the classification of documents and other security procedures. I said I thought under the circumstances the best thing for me to do would be to put in touch with the agency's director of security, a gentleman named Harold Osborne, who would then be able to talk with him and be as responsive to his requests as the agency could be. It was apparently to Mr. Osborne that Mr. Young originally made the request for a profile on Dr. Ellsberg. Mr. Osborne then brought this request to me.

DORSON: Excuse me, Ambassador, could you briefly summarize at the present time what this profile is?

HELMS: There had been -- well, I guess -- I'm sort of searching for a word here, but, in any event, over a period of some years, the agency had developed a technique for putting together a lot of information about a foreigner, maybe a foreign statesman or a foreign dignitary, and then attempting to analyze what sort of a human being he was. These things were called variously. I think psychological profile is as good a title as any -- psychological study. The idea was to give insights into what motivated some of these individuals, why they did things the way they did, and so forth. David Young knew that the agency wrote papers such as this because he'd seen them when he was on Dr. Kissinger's staff. So he then said that he wanted the agency to do this, and I remonstrated with him. I said we know nothing about Dr. Ellsberg. I've never laid eyes on him in my life. We have no records on him. We know nothing about him, and I think this is an imposition to ask us to do this. He plead with me. He said that this was very important, that the White House was very much interested in getting this material

10

sorted out, that Mr. Ehrlichman regarded it as of highest priority, so did Dr. Kissinger, that we should help, that we were the only ones they knew in town who did things of this kind and has practice of doing them, and that please would we do so.

I want to say here that the agency has a charge under the statute -- the National Security Act of 1947 which makes the director responsible for protection of intelligence sources and methods from unauthorized disclosure. That's written into the law, and this is a charge that's been on the director since 1947, and it's been a very difficult charge because finding out how leaks occur and how the enemy gets privileged information and things of that kind is very difficult to do without having an investigative staff, and the agency never has had an investigative staff for these purposes, and therefore this business about leaks and investigations thereof has been a very difficult, if not impossible, charge to carry out. And when I was testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee back in May, in response to a question from Senator Hubert Humphrey, I suggested that this language in the law either be taken out or amended in such a way that it was a fair charge on the director other than what I thought was an unfair charge, but it was that charge which gave him the leverage to rather oblige me to go along with an effort to make this profile.

DORSON: Did the staff of the Central Intelligence Agency thereafter prepare such a profile?

HELMS: Yes, they did.

DORSON: And was it forwarded to Mr. Young?

HELMS: I understand that it was forwarded to Mr. Young, that it was found to be unsatisfactory, that Mr. Young remonstrated with the people who had written it about the fact that it was unsatisfactory. I believe it was -- I've learned since that it was pointed out to him that more material was going to have to be provided, otherwise they couldn't do any better than they had done already. Mr. Young said all right, and we'll try to get you some more material, which I believe he did, so that a second profile was written.

DORSON: And was the second profile delivered to Mr. Young also?

HELMS: I believe so. In other words, this is the second version. I think probably that's better English.

DORSON: Did you have a conversation with Mr. Young in connection with the delivery of the second profile to him?

HELMS: Yes. As a matter of fact, I did call him and I told him that psychologists and psychiatrists who were working on this were very disturbed about the whole exercise. They didn't feel that the material they'd been given was adequate, that they were being put in an unfair position, that they didn't want their

11

professional reputations put on the line as a result of this kind of an exercise, and that if he was insisting on having this, then I wanted his understanding and his undertaking that he would not identify it with the agency and put these fellows in jeopardy. Or put these fellows professional reputation in jeopardy, which is a...

DORSON: During the period that the two profiles were prepared, which I believe was -- took us into early November of 1971, what was your understanding as to the identity of the persons over at the White House who were involved in requesting the profile and providing information to the agency for the profile?

HELMS: I never heard of anybody being connected with this exercise except Mr. David Young. And when I returned here in May of this year, 1973, I was informed at the agency that during this period that this psychologist had been consulting with David Young at the White House, that Howard Hunt had been present, on one occasion anyway, and that he had specifically asked him not to inform me that he had been present. They certainly did not inform me, so I was totally unaware of his identification with this exercise in any form whatever.

DORSON: And the first time you heard about his participation was in May of 1973?

HELMS: That is correct.

DORSON: To the best of your knowledge, Ambassador Helms, was any of the material that was used in the preparation of the psychological profile derived from the office of the psychiatrist of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg or from any other illegal or improper source?

HELMS: I have never heard that alleged.

DORSON: Ambassador Helms, I would like now to direct your attention to June of 1972, and ask you when for the first time did you hear of the break-in of the Democratic National Committee Headquarters at the Watergate?

HELMS: It's my impression that I heard about it -- I read about it in the newspapers or heard it on the radio. But this is not any lapse of memory, this is just one of those things that this far back it's hard to know just exactly who might have told me or how I might have heard it. Certainly it was big news from the moment it happened.

DORSON: And during the days immediately following the break-in, were there conversations at the CIA concerning the break-in?

HELMS: In the first place, sometime on that weekend.

12

I received a telephone call from Mr. Howard Osborne, the director of security, to inform me that -- of the names of the individuals who had participated in the break-in and also to say that Mr. Hunt, in some fashion, was connected with it. Mr. Osborne's call to me was a perfectly routine matter. There was a charge on him as director of security to inform me whenever anybody in the agency got in any kind of trouble, whether they're present employees or past employees, in other words, right now, so that I didn't have to catch up with these events like suicides and house break-ins and rapes and the various things that happen to the employees of any organization in a city like Washington, so this was a perfectly routine thing. And when he heard about these ex-CIA people who had been involved in this burglary, he called me up and notified me about it. On Monday, when I came to the office, there'd been no mention in the papers of Mr. Hunt, so I got ahold of Mr. Osborne and said, "How come you told me that Mr. Hunt was involved with this?" And he said, "Well, there were some papers found in the hotel room, or one of the hotel rooms, with Hunt's name on it, and it looks as though he were somewhere in the area when the break-in took place." So I said, "All right."

And from then on, obviously, there were various conversations in the agency. We went to work on various requests from the FBI for information about the people and their background and so forth who had formerly been employed by the agency.

DORSON: Am I correct that James McCord also was a former employee of the agency?

HELMS: He was.

DORSON: And when did Mr. McCord and Mr. Hunt leave the employ of the agency?

HELMS: They left it at different times in 1970. They both retired, as I recall it.

DORSON: Now, directing your attention to June 22nd, 1972, which was the day before your meeting with Mr. Ehrlichman, Mr. Haldeman and General Walters at the White House, did you have a conversation with Patrick Gray on that afternoon, namely, the afternoon of June 22nd?

HELMS: I believe that the committee is in possession of a memorandum which says that -- a memorandum or a note from Mr. Gray that says I had this conversation. I have no reason to question that at all. I was talking back and forth with Mr. Gray at various times in connection with this Watergate break-in, so I have no reason to doubt that there was one on the 22nd of June.

DORSON: In these conversations, did you discuss the possibility of CIA involvement in the break-in?

13

HELMS: I assured Mr. Gray that the CIA had no involvement in the break-in, no involvement whatever, and it was my preoccupation, consistently from then to this time, to make this point and to be sure that everybody understands it. It doesn't seem to get across very well for some reason, but the agency had nothing to do with the Watergate break-in. I hope all the newspapermen in the room hear me clearly now.

DORSON: Ambassador Helms, I'd like to move, then, to June 23rd, 1972, and ask you if you recall attending the meeting with Mr. Ehrlichman, Mr. Haldeman and General Walters?

HELMS: I do recall attending that meeting.

DORSON: Where was that meeting held?

HELMS: That meeting was held in Mr. Ehrlichman's office on the second floor of the East -- West Wing of the White House.

DORSON: Do you recall the time of that meeting?

HELMS: The meeting had been originally scheduled for 12 o'clock. It was changed to 1 o'clock, and it took place shortly after 1 o'clock.

DORSON: Could you please describe to us, in substance, what happened at that meeting?

HELMS: General Walters and I arrived first and waited for a few minutes. Then Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Ehrlichman came into the room. As best I can recall what was said, and Mr. Haldeman did most of the talking, so -- and whatever Mr. Ehrlichman contributed in the course of this was either to nod his head or to smile or to agree with what Mr. Haldeman said. I just simply want to introduce it this way because then it's a little bit easier for me to describe. Mr. Haldeman said there was a lot of flak about the Watergate burglary, that the opposition was capitalizing on it, but that it was going to -- it was apparently causing some sort of unidentified trouble, and he wanted to know whether the agency had anything to do with it. I assured him that the agency had nothing to do with it. He then said that the five men who had been found in the Democratic National Committee Headquarters had been arrested, and that that seemed to be adequate, under the circumstances, that the FBI was investigating what this was all about, and that they, unidentified, were concerned about some FBI investigations in Mexico. He also at that time made some, what to me was an incoherent reference to an investigation in Mexico -- an FBI investigation -- running into the Day of Pigs. I don't know what the reference was alleged to be, but, in any event, I assured him that I had no interest in the Bay of Pigs that many years later, that everything in connection with that had been dealt with or liquidated, as far as I was aware, and I didn't care they ran into in connection with that. At some juncture in this conversation, Mr. Haldeman then said something to the effect that it has

14

been decided that General Walters will go and talk to Acting Director Gray of the FBI and indicate to him that these operations -- that these investigations of the FBI might run into CIA operations in Mexico and that it was desirable that this not happen and that the investigation therefore should be either tapered off or reduced or something, but there was no language saying stop, as far as I recall. At this point, the references to Mexico were quite unclear to me. I had to recognize that if the White House -- the President, Mr. Haldeman, somebody in high authority -- had information about something in Mexico, which I did not have information about, which is quite possible. The White House constantly has information which others don't have -- that it would be a prudent thing for me to find out if there was any possibility that some CIA operation was being -- was going to be affected. And therefore I waited the necessary time to do this. I say this in explanation of the fact that since I consistently pointed out that no CIA operations had been violated by any investigation up to then, that we had nothing to do with the Watergate burglary, the fact of the matter was that if an investigation continued to go on, it might run into something we were doing in Mexico. I mean, this possibility always has to exist. Nobody knows everything about everything. So, at this point, I think it was repeated a second time that General Walters was to go and see Acting Director Gray with this charge. It was then indicated that Acting Director Gray would probably be expecting a call, that he was looking for some kind of guidance in this matter, and that this should take place as soon as possible. I believe Mr. Ehrlichman at that point made his sole contribution to the conversation, which was that he should get down and see Gray just as fast as he could. We left this meeting, General Walters and I, and went downstairs to the automobile, and I spoke to General Walters along the following lines. I said, "When you go to see Acting Director Gray, I think you should confine yourself to reminding him that the agency and the FBI have a delimitation agreement."

There's been an understanding for many years that if the agency runs into any FBI agents or operations, the FBI shall be immediately notified; and if the FBI runs into any agency agents or operations, it shall be immediately notified. I wasn't sure whether Acting Director Gray was familiar with this because he had not been Acting Director of the FBI for very long. I wanted General Walters to understand about this because he'd been with the agency I think only about six weeks at that time and he'd been having briefings, and I wasn't sure whether this had ever come to his attention. In other words, I was asking him to make a legitimate request of the Acting Director of the FBI that if they ran into any CIA operations in Mexico or anyplace else, they were to notify us immediately, and I felt General Walters should restrict his conversation with Acting Director Gray to that point. Precisely whether he did or not, well, you'll have an opportunity to ask him.

TORSON: And to your knowledge, did General Walters have

15

a meeting with Patrick Gray?

HELMS: Yes. He had one very shortly after this meeting in the White House because he reported to me later in the day about his meeting with Gray, that he'd been to see him, that the general purport of what they had discussed, and then for the first time I learned that Acting Director Gray had told General Walters at this meeting about some money having been sent to Mexico. I was unaware of any money having been sent there at the time, and even that explanation didn't say what the money was for. But also floating around in this at the time was the name of a Mexican lawyer that we'd been asked to check out by the FBI to find out if this man was in any way connected with the CIA. His name was Ogaria (?), I believe. And we had been running tracers, which is a word of ours of going through the records to find out, and checking with our people in Mexico to see if they knew him, and so forth. And that was some days subsequent that we got the information back that he was indeed a lawyer in Mexico, but we'd never had any connection with him, and I so notified the FBI.

DORSON: Now, on Monday, June 26th, did General Walters receive a telephone call from John Dean?

HELMS: General Walters told me that he'd been called by a man he did not know in the White House named John Dean, and that Dean had asked to see him. And when Walters said, "What do you want to see me about?" And so forth. I believe Dean referred to the matters on which we had talked with Haldeman and Ehrlichman on the previous Friday. In any event, Dean said to General Walters, "If you want to verify my bona-fides and who I am and my authority to talk with you, please call John Ehrlichman." So by the time Walters talked to me and said that he had talked to Dean, had verified by telephone conversation with Ehrlichman that it was all right to talk to Dean, and that he was going down to see him.

DORSON: Now, when General Walters came back from seeing Dean, did he talk to you about the meeting?

HELMS: He reported the meeting to me and told me that Dean had raised with him this question of the Watergate burglary, that there were a lot of problems in connection with it, problems unidentified. Was there any way in which the agency could help and so on. It was quite clear that some kind of feelers were being put out to see, A, if there was any agency involvement, or, B, whether the agency was prepared to assist in some way which was not at all identified. It was at this meeting with General Walters, when he was reporting this to me, that I told him that I wanted him to be absolutely certain he permitted nothing to happen using the agency's name, facilities, or anything else in connection with this business. I said I didn't care whether he wanted to be a scapegoat. I didn't care whether he was prepared to quit on the issue. I didn't care anything about that. I simply wanted him to do absolutely nothing 'cause I told him point-blank that even though he was a military officer and even though he was a presidential

16

appointee, that if he did something wrong that would besmirch the name of the agency, not matter whether he took the blame or not, I was simply not going to have it. And I wanted him to be perfectly clear on this in any conversation he had with Mr. Dean or with anybody else. And as he reported to me on the subsequent two conversations with Mr. Dean, I not only reaffirmed this, but I said, "Now, you hang in there. You're doing fine, but don't you yield an inch."

DORSON: You've alluded to the two meetings that General Walters had with John Dean on the 27th and 28th. Did General Walters notify you before each meeting and brief you as to what occurred after each meeting?

HELMS: General Walters was very good about this. As best I recall it, he told me each time that he was going down there, and when the meeting was over, he came back and reported what had taken place at it.

DORSON: Could you briefly summarize for us, Ambassador, what General Walters told you with respect to the meeting of the 27th and the meeting of the 28th?

HELMS: It is my recollection that it was at the meeting of the 27th, which was Tuesday, I believe, that the issue first came up of whether or not the CIA, out of its covert funds was prepared to provide bail money for the defendants in the Watergate burglary. Not only did this issue come up, but I also believe that the additional point was made -- would it be possible for the CIA to pay the salaries of these individuals while they served their jail sentences?

General Walters -- and I have told you about the conversation I had with General Walters the day before about how he was to guide himself in this matter -- pointed out to Mr. Dean that the agency couldn't possibly do anything like that, that he had no authority to do it on his own, that his authorities derived from me, and that he knew what my position was. And, in addition, he said that he couldn't conceivably imagine that a thing like that would remain secret forever. And, last but not least, under the groundrules which we operate -- the agency operated with the Congress of the United States, any exceptional expenditure of this kind would have to be identified to the Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee and the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee.

DORSON: During the...

HELMS: This obviously cooled Mr. Dean's ardor.

DORSON: And it was so reported to you?

HELMS: Yes.

17

DORSON: During the week of the 26th, did you receive a telephone call from Patrick Gray with respect to setting up a meeting between representatives of the two agencies?

HELMS: Yes, I do recall a conversation to set up a meeting because I was anxious to have one with him. There were a lot of traces we were running, there were the involvements with these former CIA people that we'd been passing to the FBI, there were starting to be a lot of leaks out of the FBI, for the first time that I could remember, on matters of this kind, leaks of ongoing operational material, and I wanted to get together with him and some of his people to see if we couldn't get some of these things, not straightened out so much, as get walking along in harmony. So we agreed to have the meeting the next day. The next morning, which I believe was the 28th, if I -- I may be mistaken. It's all in the record, I'm sure -- he called back and said that he was so busy that he couldn't make the meeting, it wasn't possible for him to hold it, and he would probably have to put it off until the following week. I told him I was sorry about that because I was planning to leave the end of the week in which we were speaking, to go to Austria, and that I wasn't going to be there the following week, and if he had a meeting it was going to have to be with General Walters.

DORSON: Now, I asked you about the second two meetings on the 27th and 28th between General Walters and Mr. Dean. Did the summary that you gave us apply to the two meetings together, or was that solely with respect to the meeting of the 27th?

HELMS: I am not able any longer, Mr. Counsel, to sort out precisely what -- out of my own memory -- what occurred at each of these meetings. I have two very clear recollections. One was that it was at the second meeting that the question of the bail money came up, because I don't recall that at all in connection with my longer conversation with General Walters after the first meeting.

As far as the third meeting was concerned, my distinct impression of that was that this was just more feelers and that it was relatively short because Mr. Dean was getting nowhere with General Walters.

DORSON: Just one or two questions more, Mr. Ambassador. You were familiar, were you not, with the fact that General Walters was preparing memoranda of these meetings?

HELMS: Yes, because after the issue came up of possible bail or paying the salaries of the fellows who had broken in, this struck me that we were getting into an area here which was very questionable indeed, and that therefore, these various meetings ought to be a matter of record in case this ever came up at any future time. So it was at that point that in our conversation, as I recall it, General Walters -- either General Walters or I

18

or both of us agreed that this ought to be -- these things ought to be reduced to writing, and that a record ought to be kept.

DORSON: Am I correct, then, that you did go to Australia around the first of July of 1972?

HELMS: Yes, I did.

DORSON: And that Patrick Gray did not schedule the meeting between -- reschedule the meeting between the two of you before you left?

HELMS: I never met with him.

DORSON: Mr. Chairman, I have no further questions at this time.

FRED THOMPSON: As I understand it, you had a conversation with Patrick Gray on June the 22nd when you advised him that the CIA was not involved in the break-in. Was your conversation limited to CIA involvement in the break-in, or did you go into whether or not the investigation might undercover [sic] other CIA operations possibly?

HELMS: I don't recall ever discussing with Mr. Gray this question of uncovering other CIA operations.

THOMPSON: Strictly the break-in discussion.

HELMS: That we had no involvement, and believe that as part of this conversation there was this business about the Mexican lawyer. I don't recall whether he was specifically mentioned -- the Mexican lawyer was mentioned at that time. But Mr. Gray had on his mind in some way the idea that there was some CIA involvement that they were running into, and I was attempting to reassure him that this was not the case, as best I knew it.

THOMPSON: CIA involvement in the Watergate break-in itself.

HELMS: Or in some way connected with it.

THOMPSON: I see. Did he state the source of his concern?

HELMS: He never did.

THOMPSON: Did he indicate whether or not it was due to the bureau's own investigation or whether or not someone else had told him that from outside the bureau?

HELMS: I was unable to tell. I simply was surprised that this kept coming up.

THOMPSON: And so the next day you had the conversation

with Mr. Walters and Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Ehrlichman, as I understand it, and I'd like to go over briefly what you stated was discussed in that conversation. I believe you stated that Mr. Haldeman indicated that the Watergate was being capitalized on, that five men had been arrested and that seemed adequate, and that sort of thing. Obviously, the Watergate investigation was the reason for the meeting, was it not, and as to what the investigation might disclose? That was the basis for the meeting?

HELMS: Well, I can only assume in hindsight that it was, Mr. Thompson, because at the time nobody had identified to us why we were being called to the White House. In other words, we arrived and waited to hear what the subject of the meeting was.

THOMPSON: When they stated their concern about a possible Mexican involvement or a Mexican involvement of the CIA, of course, they were talking about the Watergate investigation turning up other involvement, were they not?

HELMS: I assumed this is what they were talking about, yes. But as I mentioned a moment ago -- and I do want to underline this -- I was totally unfamiliar at that time with what Mexico had to do with anything.

THOMPSON: But you had talked to Pat Gray the day before, and I believe you stated that you felt that he might have mentioned a Mexican lawyer at that time?

HELMS: Yes, sir. But when the Mexican lawyer's name was mentioned, there was never any implication as to why they were even asking about him, so that this was not very revealing.

THOMPSON: What I'm concerned about is just the extent to which the Watergate situation was actually discussed because -- of course, I think it'd be fair to say that some appearances, from what has been reported in some of the testimony in this forum and others, is that the Watergate investigation was the reason for the concern, and it could have been legitimate concern. It could have been a possible cover-up of the Watergate investigation itself, into the Watergate matter, into -- this is the area I'd like to address myself to (word unintelligible). And I'd like to refer to your testimony before the Committee on Armed Services, Thursday, May 17, 1973. Now, I had a little bit of difficulty getting this myself last night and this morning. I've just received it, and if you would like, in the course of my discussion of it, for us to recess, with permission of the chairman of the committee, where you can have a copy of it or a copy of certain pages, I feel like we can do that. But if it's all right with you, I'll go ahead and proceed right now and read certain portions of that and ask you a few questions based on that.

SENATOR BAKER: Mr. Chairman, I note that the transcript from which Mr. Thompson is about to read is nominally classified

as secret. I take it that there is no objection on the part of the committee nor any claim on the part of the committee that it does not have the authority to permit counsel to go ahead and read from that document, as it relates to the mandate for inquiry of this committee.

SENATOR ERVIN: Mr. Helms, I understand from the resolution, also from the statement made, as I understand it, to the staff attorneys by the White House attorneys, that they left the question of matters of this kind to the determination of the committee.

SENATOR BAKER: Mr. Chairman, I entirely agree with you. I simply wanted to make sure that the record reflected that fact. It is the committee position, notwithstanding the nominal secret classification, that, by reason of our inherent authority and by reason of communications to us from the White House, that we have the authority to read from that document into the public record.

SENATOR ERVIN: And I might add that the chairmen of the committees which took this -- of the Senate committees which took this evidence, have also said that as far as they had it in their power, they'd consent to the use of it.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

THOMPSON: Mr. Helms, were Mr. Walters and yourself being questioned at the same time on this occasion? Were you in the same room together?

HELMS: On that occasion, General Walters was sitting on my right and General Cushman was sitting on my left, so we were in the room together the whole time.

THOMPSON: Let me read, and I might, and if you prefer me to read other portions that you might remember or go back a little further, then I will, but there's a general, preliminary section here where you said it was not a very long conversation and he'd mentioned the Bay of Pigs. And there's:

"Ambassador Helms: Where you can..."

First of all:

"Mr. Wolsley (?): Let's go back to the meeting itself for a moment. When Mr. Haldeman said that it had been decided that the general should call on Mr. Gray, did he say or intimate in any way who had decided upon that course of action?"

"Ambassador Helms: Well, you could make an intimation. But I'd rather not draw an intimation if the chairman will relieve me of that. Here was Mr. Haldeman, Mr. Ehrlichman, the two most

senior officials in the White House next to the President himself giving this instruction. I really feel right now, as I did then, that it would have been presumptuous to have pressed them any harder. Just how they had come up with this and where they'd gotten the idea, or who was behind it."

"Mr. Wolsley: You said Mr. Haldeman mentioned the Bay of Pigs. Did he mention the Watergate case itself in the course of the conversation?"

"Ambassador Helms: No."

"Mr. Wolsley: He did not?"

"Ambassador Helms: No."

"Senator Symington: General Walters, you confirm that, do you?"

"General Walters: Yes, sir. He didn't mention the Watergate."

"Senator Symington: I heard you volunteer -- volunteering, and as long as you did, I thought it should be on the record."

"Mr. Wolsley: Maybe this is something that we should get cleared up, but the committee was given a copy of General Walters' affidavit."

"General Walters: He did in the introduction when he said, 'This case had stirred up a lot of things, and the opposition is attempting to exploit it.' That was the reference I testified to previously. I believe as we came in, he said the Watergate has stirred up a lot of things. The opposition is attempting to exploit it -- General Walters talking -- and it has been decided that you will go. That was the inevitable lead into the whole reference."

"Senator Jackson: Decided that you would go?"

"General Walters: To Mr. Gray and tell him if he pursued the Mexican part of the financing of this business, it will uncover CIA assets or scheme for moving the money."

"Mr. Wolsley: I should perhaps read into the record here a few sentences from General Walters' affidavit. Quote: As I recall it, Mr. Haldeman said that the Watergate incident was causing trouble and being exploited by the opposition. It had been decided at the White House that I would go to Acting FBI Director Gray and tell him that now that the five suspects were arrested, further inquiries into the Mexican aspect of the matter might jeopardize some of the CIA's activities in this area.

Was there any discussion at all in the meeting of Watergate?"

22

"Ambassador Helms: Not to the best of my recollection, and I frankly was hard put at the time to understand what Mexico was involved with. This was only a week after the break-in. I didn't know why Mexico was being mentioned, and it never occurred to me that it had anything to do with the Watergate burglary."

"Senator Symington: General Walters, do you agree with that?"

"General Walters: To me the whole question was connected by virtue of the beginning of the thing when he said Watergate could be opened as a preliminary, as a lead-in as to why he wanted me to go. It was obviously a lead-in to this, but he didn't go into any discussion of the Watergate, other than what I said in the beginning."

And then you go to other matters, Mr. Helms. Let me see if I've summarized this correctly. The question was put directly to you first as to whether or not there was any Watergate discussion, and you said there was not.

HELMS: That was the way I recalled it, Mr. Thompson. But in the time since then, I've seen General Walters' memorandum for the record, I've talked with him about this, and we went over again what had occurred, and I frankly at that point had forgotten this lead-in to the conversation. After all, I'd been away for sometime, I'd been involved with other things, and if my memory was less than perfect at that time, it was less than perfect. I had no intention of jiggery, pokery, or anything else.

THOMPSON: I'm certainly not accusing you or any other witness of anything, but I do want to clear it up. I'm not sure I have my chronology right. I'm reading from page 2180 of the transcript. The question was posed to you. You said no. He said he did not. You said no. General Walters, will you confirm that? And General Walters says yes, sir. He didn't mention the Watergate. And then Mr. Wolsley said this is something we should clear up, and he refers to General Walters' affidavit at that time, which he had previously submitted, in which he mentioned these things.

HELMS: Well, Mr. Thompson, what I'm referring to and what I saw subsequently was a memorandum for the record, which I believe is in the custody of the committee, which was written several days before this 23 June conversation.

THOMPSON: That's correct. That's the memorandum dated June 23rd, 1972, I believe.

HELMS: I think that's correct, and it was that memorandum which I subsequently saw, which I had not seen at the time that I was testifying. I talked to General Walters about it. I had no reason to, at that point, to question General Walters' memorandum. He has an excellent ability to recall, as you probably are aware.

He's an excellent linguist, and anybody who can speak five or six languages with the ability that he can certainly has the mental equipment to recall something for five days after the event took place, and I obviously talked to him about this, and I had clearly forgotten that introductory aspect of this.

THOMPSON: Well, Mr. Helms, are you basing your testimony now on your own memory, or upon Mr. Walters' memory? I mean, you've recounted your faith in his memory, which, I'm sure, is probably well placed, but I would think that this would be a rather significant matter. If Haldeman and Ehrlichman, as has been widely reported from the basis of the memorandum which you just referred to, I suppose, came in and said five people had been arrested and that ought to be enough, and if that's the lead-in as to how the CIA or the FBI should conduct its investigation and the basis of CIA contact with the FBI, I would think that this was something that you would remember. So I'm really trying to determine whether your testimony is based upon your own independent recollection or just, after having read this memorandum, your faith in General Walters' recollection?

HELMS: Well, it's a combination of the two, Mr. Thompson, because when he jogged my memory and we went back over the meeting together, then I did recall these other remarks having been made.

THOMPSON: Well, he jogged your memory here, in the testimony before the committee also. That was on page 2180 again, after a member of the committee evidently raised the matter of the affidavit or the memorandum. General Walters said this. He said he did in the introduction when he said, referring to the mentioning of the Watergate, he did in the introduction when he said this case has stirred up a lot of things and the opposition is attempting to exploit it.

I believe your testimony here today was "attempting to capitalize on it." That was the reference I testified to previously. I believe -- and I assume he's referring to his affidavit or memorandum -- I believe as we came in he said the Watergate has stirred up a lot of things and the opposition is attempting to exploit it. It had been decided that you will go -- that was an interval lead-in.

"Mr. Wolsley: I should perhaps read in the record a few sentences of General Walters' affidavit."

And then at that time they read into the record a few sentences of General Walters' affidavit, which you just referred to, which is the memorandum that I referred to. Quote: As I recall it, Mr. Haldeman said that the Watergate incident was causing a lot of problems and being exploited by the opposition. It had been decided by the White House I should go to Acting Director of the FBI Gray and that five suspects were arrested. Further inquiries into the Mexican aspects of the matter might jeopardize some of the CIA activities.

24

And another question is put by a member of the committee. Was there any discussion in the meeting at all of Watergate?

"Ambassador Helms: Not to the best of my recollection."

HELMS: Well, I didn't recall it at that time, but when I went over this with General Walters and we tried to piece this meeting together, then I did recall that these matters had been alluded to.

THOMPSON: Did it occur to you, or has it affected you either consciously or sub-consciously, the fact that it could be very -- or, at least to some extent embarrassing for General Walters if you testified contrary to him? Did you discuss that possibility with him when you went over these matters?

HELMS: No, because I saw him just a moment before we actually went into the room.

THOMPSON: Of course, it was after you got into the room before you realized that you had any -- there was any (word unintelligible) in your testimony, was it not?

HELMS: That's right.

THOMPSON: And you were in the room before you first realized what this memorandum said, were you not?

HELMS: The memorandum -- as a matter of fact, that memorandum was not on the table at that time, as I recall it. There was an affidavit, but I believe that those memoranda were submitted subsequently to the committee. I may be wrong.

THOMPSON: And in comparing your testimony today with what his memorandum says, a couple of things do strike me. His memorandum dated June 28th says that on June 23rd at 1300, on request, I called with Director Helms on John Ehrlichman and Robert Haldeman in Ehrlichman's office in the White House. Haldeman said that the bugging affair at the Democratic National Committee Headquarters at the Watergate Apartments had made a lot of noise and that the Democrats were trying to maximize on it.

And down here he says, since five suspects have been arrested, this should be sufficient.

Let me ask you a few other things about this memorandum, while we're on it, Mr. Helms. He states in here also that Haldeman said the whole affair was getting embarrassing and it was the President's wish that Walters call on Gray and suggest to him that since five suspects had been arrested, this should be sufficient. It was not advantageous to have the inquiry pushed, comma, especially in Mexico.

Do you recall the President's name being mentioned?

25

HELMS: No, I still don't agree with General Walters about that. I don't recall its having been put that way.

THOMPSON: Director Helms said -- again reading from the Walters memorandum -- he had talked to Gray on the previous day, made plain to him the agency was not behind the matter and it was not connected with it. None of the suspects was working for it, nor had worked for the agency in the last two years. He had told Gray that none of the investigators was touching any covert projects of the agency, current or ongoing.

Did you tell Mr. Gray that it was touching onto the covert projects of the agency, or did you have any basis for saying that at that time?

HELMS: I was unaware of any covert projects of the agency that had been touched on up to that time.

THOMPSON: Did you tell Gray that, if you recall, or did you just simply tell him the CIA was not involved in the Watergate break-in?

HELMS: I told him the CIA was not involved in the Watergate break-in. I do not recall whether I told him that it had not thus far run into any CIA covert projects.

THOMPSON: Did you tell him that none of the suspects was working for the CIA nor had worked for the agency in the last two years?

HELMS: Yes.

THOMPSON: That at least one of the suspects had worked for the FBI previous to -- for the CIA previous to the last two years then. Is that correct?

HELMS: Who was that, sir?

THOMPSON: Well, I'm asking you. You said none of them had worked for the CIA within the last two years. I assumed that before that at least one of them had.

HELMS: Well, Mr. McCord had been an employee of the CIA for some twenty years before he retired. Mr. Hunt had worked there at least fifteen, maybe more, and a couple of the Cubans had at one time a contractual relationship with the agency.

THOMPSON: Do you know which two Cubans?

HELMS: Do you mind giving me the names. I'm not a computer, and I can't...

THOMPSON: Would it be Barker? Perhaps Mr. Barker?

HELMS: Barker I think had a relationship back in the early '60s. I think -- is Sturgis another individual?

THOMPSON: Yes.

HELMS: I think he at one time had had some connection. Martinez had been on sort of a retainer to report on individuals who came in from Cuba, as to whether they'd be worth interrogating or interviewing or not in Florida, and he'd been on that retainer of about \$100 a month on the understanding that he would report in from time to time when he had something to report. When I found that he was still on -- had this connection with the agency at the time of his break-in, he was cut off.

THOMPSON: When was he cut off?

HELMS: Right after we had discovered that he was involved in the break-in.

THOMPSON: You mean Martinez was on retainer by the CIA at the time of the break-in?

HELMS: That's right. But in Florida for the purposes I've identified.

THOMPSON: I beg your pardon. In Florida? I didn't understand that last statement.

HELMS: Mr. Martinez was a resident in Florida, as far as the agency knew. Because he lived in Florida and because he was a Cuban exile, he was kept on a loose arrangement whereby he would report to the agency from time to time Cubans who got out of Cuba, either legally or illegally, whom he thought might have some information that would be useful to the United States Government, and then he would report it and give the name of this individual.

THOMPSON: When was he taken off retainer by the CIA?

HELMS: When it was ascertained that he was involved in the break-in, he was taken off right then.

THOMPSON: When was it ascertained that he was involved in the break-in?

HELMS: Well, I assume when his name was given to us by the FBI, which was the, I imagine, within 24 hours or 48 hours or 72 hours after the break-in.

THOMPSON: How was this done? Did the CIA communicate with Mr. Martinez? Was there any paperwork involved?

27

HELMS: I don't recall the precise details of the way it was done. There are many people in the agency who can tell you. It may even be in your records already. The agency has been most cooperative in turning over lots of written material about these various matters, and I imagine it's in there someplace. I just don't remember.

THOMPSON: Well, it seems to me, Mr. Helms, that there might well have been concern as to the role of the FBI -- or the CIA -- by all parties involved at this particular time, right after the break-in in June of '72, if in fact one of the persons who had broken in was at that time on retainer by the CIA. Did you know at the time of your conversation with Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Ehrlichman on the 23rd that Mr. Martinez was in fact on retainer?

HELMS: I don't recall. I imagine I may have. But that doesn't mean that the CIA was involved in the burglary.

THOMPSON: No, sir. No, sir. I'm...

HELMS: I don't think you ought to put words in my mouth.

THOMPSON: I didn't think I was. The issue seems to be whether or not there was legitimate concern with regard to either, at that time, whether the CIA was involved in the burglary, or whether or not other covert CIA activities might be exposed, or whether or not Haldeman and Ehrlichman, quite frankly, were using this as an excuse to cover up the Watergate investigation, which also, quite frankly, has been widely implied, to say the least. Now, that's what I'm trying to get at. Now, you've already mentioned the fact that you had talked to Patrick Gray and there was some talk besides the people who had been involved in the Watergate break-in. McCord was a former CIA agent. Hunt was a former CIA agent. Martinez was on retainer at the time of the break-in. Sturgis had former contact -- a former employee of the CIA. Also, in Mexico, as I understand, there was some talk about an attorney down there as being a CIA contact, I suppose, would be the correct way to put that, would it not?

HELMS: That was what we were asked, if we had any connection with him.

THOMPSON: You talked to Mr. Gray, I believe, on June 27 about a Mr. Ogario down there, did you not?

HELMS: The FBI had asked us if this Mexican lawyer had any connection with the agency. We conducted an investigation to ascertain whether or not he had, and I reported to Mr. Gray that he had no connection with the agency. We knew nothing about him.

THOMPSON: But what I'm trying to get at is the 27th, four days after this meeting, there was still some discussion

28

as to whether or not there was a problem with Mr. Ogario. If notes are my correct, Mr. Gray called you about this matter at 11:30 A.M., and you could not or did not respond immediately, and you returned Mr. Gray's call at 3:40 that afternoon and said that the CIA did not in fact have any interest in Mr. Ogario. Is that your recollection?

HELMS: But I want to point out, Mr. Thompson, in case there's any question in your mind, that whenever we were initially asked about this Mexican lawyer, it would have taken a few days to ascertain this, to be sure about it. We have to check files and records, and we'd have to check with people in Mexico, and this is not something that would happen from one minute to the next. But I don't recall when the first inquiry was made to us about a man named Ogario. I just simply know from the record, since I've consulted the record on this point, that I did report this back to Mr. Gray that we had no connection with him -- the agency had no connection with him -- on the 27th of June. I believe you have documents there in my own handwriting attesting to this.

THOMPSON: But, Mr. Helms, just in order that we're clear as we can be on this, I would like to ask you one more time whether, to the best of your independent recollection, Mr. Baldeman did say that the opposition was capitalizing on the Watergate, and five men had been arrested and that was adequate.

HELMS: I can't vouch for those exact words, but as I reconstructed this meeting with General Walters and went over it, there was some sort of a lead-in or reference at the beginning of the conversation to this burglary.

THOMPSON: And it was after your sitting there in the same room with General Walters and hearing his testimony that it did in fact occur, and it was after your reading his memorandum where he stated that it did in fact occur, before you first mentioned yourself that you recalled that it did in fact occur. Is that correct?

HELMS: That's relatively -- I'm sure -- that's good enough, anyway.

THOMPSON: I have no further questions. Thank you.

SENATOR ERVIN: Senator Montoya.

SENATOR JOSEPH MONTONYA: I just have two questions, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Mr. Ambassador, did you know James McCord personally?

HELMS: Yes, Senator Montoya.

SENATOR MONTONYA: How long had you known him?

29

HELMS: Well, it's hard to tell you when I might have first met him, but I saw him from time to time during, let's say, the time that I was the director of the agency, during those six and a half years. I recall his having been in my office on two or three occasions on various matters.

SENATOR MONTTOYA: What kind of a man was he?

HELMS: He had a good reputation.

SENATOR MONTTOYA: And what was his reputation for veracity?

HELMS: I have never had any cause to question Mr. McCord's reputation for veracity.

SENATOR MONTTOYA: Would you say that his reputation as a human being, as a man, as an employee was very good?

HELMS: Yes, it was. He left a good record behind him.

SENATOR MONTTOYA: And what can you say about Mr. Hunt? Did you know him?

HELMS: Yes, I did know him.

SENATOR MONTTOYA: What was his reputation?

HELMS: Well, Mr. Hunt was -- had -- well, he had a good reputation. There were some questions at various times during his employment about how well he had carried out certain assignments, but there was nothing malign about this. It was just a question of his effectiveness. Mr. Hunt was a bit of a romantic. He used to write books in his spare time, and I think there was a tendency sometimes for him to get a little bit carried away with some of the things he was involved in, but he'd never done anything illegal or nefarious that anybody was aware of, and when he left the agency, he left a record -- a decent record behind him.

SENATOR MONTTOYA: What would you say about his reputation for veracity?

HELMS: Well, I've said, sir, that he was a romantic. I think that -- I just don't have any way of being able to answer that. I would have assumed that in matters of importance he would tell the truth.

SENATOR MONTTOYA: Now, since you spent so much time as Director of CIA, of the agency, what recommendations can you make to this committee concerning new legislation to help prevent the misuse of the Central Intelligence Agency for political or other purposes, other than the assigned purposes delineated in the act?

HELMS: Senator Montoya, I don't know how one legislates

these matters. I've never understood how morality and proper conduct and decency can be legislated about. The -- in Washington over the years there have been many occasions when various people have tried to manipulate some organization or another in an improper way. This is not new to us. We read about it in the papers constantly, but how you legislate about this, I swear to you, sir, I don't know.

SENATOR MONTOYA: Would you say that in view of your experience, with respect to this episode, there was an attempt by some people to manipulate the agency and its facilities?

HELMS: There was no question that there seemed to be an effort to use it, in quotes -- quote, use it, unquote.

SENATOR MONTOYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR ERVIN: Senator Weicker.

SENATOR LOWELL WEICKER: Mr. Ambassador, during the time from January the 20th, 1969 'til the spring of '72.

HELMS: January the 20th, 1969?

SENATOR WEICKER: Right. Well, basically, from '69 -- from the beginning of '69...

HELMS: You mean from Inauguration Day.

SENATOR WEICKER: Right -- 'til the spring of 1972, were there occasions when you were contacted by either the Attorney General John Mitchell or the Deputy Attorney General Robert Mardian?

HELMS: Well, I used to see Mr. Mitchell quite frequently because Mr. Mitchell had duties that were given him by the President that had nothing whatever to do with the conduct of the affairs of the Department of Justice. So I saw him with some regularity in meetings in his office on a variety of matters that had to do with the affairs of the agency and with our various operations.

SENATOR WEICKER: Were there any times when, in these contacts with either Mr. Mitchell -- I don't recall your having said whether or not you'd ever met Mr. Mardian or not.

HELMS: I did meet him. I met him one day in Mr. Mitchell's office, as a matter of fact.

SENATOR WEICKER: Were there any contacts that you had with either Messrs. Mardian or Mitchell where you were asked to bring the CIA into investigations of a domestic nature?

HELMS: I don't recall any such meetings. I know that

31

the time that I mentioned that I met Mr. Mardian in Mr. Mitchell's office, it's my recollection that the reason he was there was that he'd been put in charge of an internal security operation, or the division of the Justice Department, and that he was going to get together a group of individuals from the various intelligence organizations to sit with him in an effort to make up some reports and analyses and so forth about domestic unrest and things of that kind, but it was always made very clear by me, and I never was challenged by Mr. Mitchell, that anything that we contributed to these meetings had to be as a result of our work overseas, of material we'd developed there which might have some bearing on things in the United States, as for example the Fedayeen, the terrorists. We'd been working on them. We'd been working on certain people involved in drug smuggling and a variety of things.

SENATOR WEICKER: But, at no time -- in other words -- or, there wasn't any sort of a pattern of requests of trying to bring the CIA into matters that you would consider properly outside the scope of the CIA. I'm not questioning your reaction at all here. I just...

HELMS: I don't recall none, Senator Weicker.

SENATOR WEICKER: Do you recall discussing with the committee staff that you were being pushed into the domestic investigation area?

HELMS: This committee staff?

SENATOR WEICKER: Yes.

HELMS: Well, at various times, questions have come up in -- well, I remember one time there was a discussion with some of these -- the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board about domestic operations and so forth, and they didn't think they were going satisfactorily, and could the agency make a contribution to this, and I pointed out to them very quickly it could not, there was no way. But this was a matter that kept coming up in the context of feelers -- how could we do a better job? Isn't there somebody else that can take on some of these things? That the FBI isn't doing them as well as they should. Are there no other facilities?

But it was in that context. It was not a direct pressure on me -- go do it.

SENATOR WEICKER: Did you ever consider resigning your position as Director of the CIA because of these types of feelers or indications?

HELMS: No, Senator Weicker. I don't mean to be immodest, but I felt that I understood about these matters and these delimitations, and I thought I could take care of the agency better if I stayed

where I was.

SENATOR WEICKER: I gathered from your statement that you have a great pride in the agency.

HELMS: I do, sir.

SENATOR WEICKER: And the only point that I'm trying to bring out -- and let me just relate to your last answer -- did you have any concern that if you left the agency as its director that it might get into these other types of areas?

HELMS: Well, I don't know that my thinking ever went quite that far, but -- because I had no reason to suppose that my successor would be a man of inadequate caliber.

SENATOR WEICKER: But you felt that...

HELMS: That I had been around a long time, and I thought I understood pretty well what we were supposed to do and what we were not supposed to do, and if there are any sins that the agency has committed, they're on my shoulders. I'm not pawning them off on anybody else. I knew the ground rules. I knew the laws and all the rest of it, and I did the best I could to keep the agency free and clear and sailing straight.

SENATOR WEICKER: And I gather you thought -- that you yourself felt that it would do just that as long as you were, excuse the expression, at the helm.

HELMS: Yes, Senator Weicker.

SENATOR WEICKER: In your meeting with Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Ehrlichman and General Walters -- and was General Cushman there at that meeting, also -- the 23rd, the meeting of the 23rd?

HELMS: Yes, sir. As I recall it, we were asked to come together by Senator Symington, and General Cushman was sitting on my left and General Walters was sitting on my right, and we were sitting right together at the table.

SENATOR WEICKER: Why wouldn't such a request, as Mr. Haldeman was making, be made to you? You were the Director of the CIA, and the request that was being made was having to do with the Acting Director of the FBI, so why not talk to you? Were you being talked around here? I'd like to get your impression.

HELMS: Yes, I was being talked around, and this -- I don't know exactly in what form this came up, but I was assured that it had been decided that General Walters was to do the talking, and obviously, I wondered at the time as to why.

SENATOR WEICKER: Did you express any -- did you make any comment at the time?

HELMS: Saying that he shouldn't do it? That I should do it?

SENATOR WEICKER: No, that, you know, turning to Mr. Haldeman, "Mr. Haldeman, if you've got anything to say to my agency, would you please say it to me rather than those that are my subordinates."

HELMS: No, I did not remonstrate, no. We were sitting right there together, the four of us, and it was being made so clear that this was the way it was going to be done and had to be, or they wanted it done that way.

SENATOR WEICKER: I have no further questions at this time, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR ERVIN: Senator Inouye.

SENATOR DANIEL INOUE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman and Mr. Vice Chairman, before proceeding, I'd like to thank both of you for your very generous remarks this morning....

Mr. Ambassador, you've indicated that as Director of the CIA, you have the statutory responsibility for, quote, the protection [Interrupted by station identification]. Now, during the period from June of '71 until your new assignment in Iran, did you have occasion to report on matters falling under that category to the President of the United States?

HELMS: No, sir, I did not report on any matters of that kind directly to the President of the United States. We had a subcommittee of the United States Intelligence Board charged with security. This involved the system of clearances and how the community would work together in classifying documents, and matters of this kind. When there were leaks which seemed to be unauthorized, particularly of material that was in intelligence channels, the matter was referred to this USIB security subcommittee to see if any information could be ascertained as to what agency of government had leaked the information, or what individual in what agency of government had given this information out. These investigations usually aborted. Efforts were made through the security officers of the other agencies to find out who might have done these things, but I don't remember any of them coming to any successful conclusion. We had no investigative staff for this. We had no rights to investigate in the State Department, for example, or in the Department of Defense. We simply counted on their people to contribute to this effort, but we had very poor results. And one of the reasons that I felt burdened by this charge in the statute over the years is that it gave me a responsibility which I had no devices for carrying out.

SENATOR INOUE: Were these discussions ever held in the Oval Office or the Cabinet Room or the President's Executive Office Building?

HELMS: Not the discussions on matters having to do

with the use of the subcommittee. I'm sure that at various times in the four years since January the 20th, 1969, there were discussions about leaks. I remember one early in the administration which took place in the Oval Office. There were several Cabinet members there, and I remember I was there myself.

SENATOR INOUE: Were you aware that these conversations may have been taped?

HELMS: I was not.

SENATOR INOUE: Mr. Butterfield has testified that these conversations were being taped. Do you think, as Director of the CIA, it is your statutory responsibility to get hold of these tapes?

HELMS: That it would be my statutory responsibility?

SENATOR INOUE: Or whoever the director is today? In order not to compromise the CIA.

HELMS: Frankly, sir, it wouldn't have occurred to me, and I didn't know that there were any tapes in existence while I was director, and since then, I really hadn't thought about it.

SENATOR INOUE: If you knew that these were being taped, do you think it would be a statutory responsibility, under the National Security Act, for the Director of the CIA to call upon the White House and to receive those tapes on the grounds that otherwise it might compromise the sources and methods of the CIA?

HELMS: I wouldn't have thought so, Senator Inoue, because it's -- we were supposed to protect them against unauthorized disclosure, and discussions with the President and his duly cleared Cabinet ministers would not constitute unauthorized disclosure.

SENATOR INOUE: A few days ago we had testimony indicating that three of these tapes were placed into the hands of a private citizen, kept away from the official custodian for 48 hours. Would you consider that proper?

HELMS: I would not consider that proper.

SENATOR INOUE: I thank you very much, sir.

SENATOR ERVIN: Senator Gurney.

SENATOR EDWARD GURNEY: Mr. Ambassador, what were Hunt's areas of work at the CIA?

HELMS: Senator Gurney, he was with the agency for many years and had a variety of assignments.

SENATOR GURNEY: You might pull that mike over...

35

HELMS: I'm sorry. I didn't move it over for you. I beg your pardon.

Had a variety of assignments, and I honestly think it would be putting my memory to too much of a test to remember what they all were. I remember there was one that he had -- some assignment in connection with the operations leading up to the so-called Bay of Pigs. But this is readily available in the agency. You could get his personnel record, and then it would be accurate.

SENATOR GURNEY: Oh, I'm not interested in a detailed account. I wondered if his areas were in the sort of work that he was doing on June 17th?

HELMS: It would be hard for me to recall. I don't -- but I'd -- I just don't remember.

SENATOR GURNEY: How often does the CIA help out former employees in the loan of equipment, as in the case of Mr. Hunt?

HELMS: Well, I can only say, Senator Gurney, that this was an extraordinary exception, and it was done because we had been asked to do it by the White House.

SENATOR GURNEY: Has it ever been done before, to your knowledge?

HELMS: Not to my knowledge.

SENATOR GURNEY: Well, has it -- do you think it has been done before without your knowledge?

HELMS: This is always possible, Senator Gurney. It's a large organization. I would hope not, but I can't say that it had never been done, no, of course not.

SENATOR GURNEY: But at least no other CIA person has said to you that, yes, we did this on some other occasion with so-and-so.

HELMS: I don't recall that having been said to me.

SENATOR GURNEY: Since this was such an unusual request, why did the CIA go ahead and cooperate with Hunt?

HELMS: Well, General Cushman had already authorized this, as I understood at the time, on the basis of Mr. Ehrlichman having asked that the agency help. At that time, as I recall it, he was -- General Cushman was simply told that this was for him to conduct an interview. We had no way of knowing whether it was an interview in the United States or an interview overseas. It had already been done by the time I learned about it, and the...

36

SENATOR GURNEY: What was your reaction when Cushman told you?

HELMS: Well, I was not pleased about it because I didn't quite understand why it was that he couldn't have acquired these things someplace else.

SENATOR GURNEY: Well, I must say that same thought occurs to me. If these were routine items of apparatus, the White House would certainly have resources enough to get those themselves.

HELMS: I would have thought so, Senator Gurney. I have learned -- I learned when I came back here in May that there were some other things given to him, such as a voice changer or something, and I believe a wig has become almost legendary in this whole matter, but I don't recall anything about the wig at the time, but I don't question that it was done.

SENATOR GURNEY: Did General Cushman ever ask him, "Now, Mr. Hunt, what do you want these things for? What are you going to use them for?"

HELMS: Well, General Cushman told me, as I recall it, was that he wanted this for a one-time interview, but General Cushman can certainly attest to these things for himself.

SENATOR GURNEY: But he didn't tell anything to you.

HELMS: And at that time, I think it's only fair to remember, that nobody had ever suggested that anybody was going to do anything illegal or improper.

SENATOR GURNEY: I understand. But it's such an unusual request, I'm really surprised that no one had a little more curiosity about what was going to be done.

HELMS: Well, it was a very high-level White House official who was asking for this help, and we tried to help, and it didn't seem that it was going to do anybody any great harm.

SENATOR GURNEY: I guess probably your answer would be the same to Mr. Young's request about the profile.

HELMS: Yes, I have genuine regrets about being pressured into that. On Monday morning there are a lot of football games that if played again might have been played differently, and, you know, I'm not proud of that one.

SENATOR GURNEY: There were, of course, these conversations with Haldeman and Ehrlichman which you have described, and Mr. Walters, I guess, had others that he reported to you about, and then the conversations with Mr. Gray. And then, of course, the conversations with Mr. Dean, when he was pressing for things like bail money and salaries while people might be in prison. Did it ever occur to anybody to go to the President of the United States

about this time and advise him of these very unusual things that were going on in the White House?

HELMS: Well, sir, my preoccupation at that time and all through these months was to keep the agency at a distance from this whole problem, and when I saw -- realized that these feelers were being made -- there was never a proposal made. It was never said, "Will you do this?" It was suppository. You know, "Would it be possible? Is this something that could happen?" And so forth. And since we had stood firm, it seemed to me that that was adequate under the circumstances.

SENATOR GURNEY: Well, I certainly commend you for that, and you did do the right thing in keeping the agency out of it. In the phone call with Mr. Gray, which you had, did you think in this phone conversation that he was trying to involve the CIA in any way?

HELMS: I didn't have that sensation, Senator Gurney. The sensation I had was I couldn't quite understand why it was that he kept thinking that the CIA was somehow involved. Now, what generated this on his part, I don't know to this day, quite honestly, but it seemed strange that he should -- well, we seem to be running into some CIA involvement. And I couldn't understand what he was talking about or how he knew this because I couldn't see any involvement, I couldn't find any involvement. And what motivated this, I don't know, and I honestly don't know even now.

SENATOR GURNEY: One final question. Mr. Thompson went over this with you, but I'm asking another question, and that of course is this business of whether Haldeman and Ehrlichman were making their requests, or Mr. Dean, for that matter, at the request of the President of the United States. And I don't want to go over that testimony again. I've heard it. But let me ask you this. In all of these transactions between you and these people, and Walters and these people, that were later reported to you, did you get any idea at all that President Nixon was involved in any cover-up here and wanting to use the CIA in the cover-up?

HELMS: President Nixon was not put forward by any of these people in their discussions. They were conducting them on their own, as far as I was aware. Implicit in this was the fact that I was talking to the President's chief of staff, and what conversations he had with the President, he never said, but he was such a senior official that I had to assume that this was something that they wanted done.

SENATOR GURNEY: Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. That's all, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR ERVIN: Senator Talmadge.

SENATOR HERMAN TALMAGE: Mr. Ambassador, you've had

38

a long and distinguished career, both as a member of the CIA for many years and ultimately its director for more than six years, and now as a distinguished ambassador representing the government of the United States.. Will you tell us why you left as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency?

HELMS: I had a conversation with the President after the election. I believe it was on November the 20th at Camp David. And we talked about my future, and he indicated that he wanted to make a change, and this was in the context of making a lot of changes in the administration. I was at that time pushing 60 and about to come what we had in the agency as the regular retirement age. This is not a statutory thing, but I had a policy in the agency that when officials got to be 60 that they retired. And this therefore seemed a good time to do this. That was why I left.

SENATOR TALMDAGE: You did not leave on your own initiative, then.

HELMS: I did not submit my resignation in the form of -- obviously, the President always has your resignation. You do serve at the pleasure of the President for the time being. That's what the commission says, so that this was a mutually-arrived-at arrangement.

SENATOR TALMDAGE: You didn't have any impression that you had been pushed out?

HELMS: Well, it wasn't put to me that way, anyway.

SENATOR TALMADGE: In other words, when the President makes a suggestion, you don't have to determine whether you're being pushed, shoved or led, do you? Would that be an affirmative answer? [No audible response.] Thank you, sir.

Did the White House contact you for a reference when they employed Mr. Hunt?

HELMS: No, sir.

SENATOR TALMADGE: Didn't you think that was strange to employ an ex-representative of the CIA without checking on his credentials with the director of that agency?

HELMS: I did, Senator Talmadge. In fact I went to some trouble at the time to see if anybody else in the agency had been checked with other than me. In other words, had they gone to the personnel office, had they gone to the security office? And I established there'd been no contact made with the agency anywhere about Mr. Hunt.

SENATOR TALMADGE: No contact whatever?

HELMS: None.

SENATOR TALMADGE: Now, what was your reaction when Mr. Young came to you in the summer of 1971 and informed you that the President's assistant, Mr. Ehrlichman, had assigned him to lead a White House investigation of security leaks? Were you surprised that that was being handled outside the FBI?

HELMS: I suppose that I was, Senator Talmadge, but there had been so much talk about leaks and so much concern about them in this particular era, that I suppose that what would have been normal surprise was somewhat dulled by this fact that maybe they weren't getting very far in establishing how these leaks had occurred, and this was somewhat of an extra effort to get into this.

SENATOR TALMADGE: Didn't J. Edgar...

HELMS: I want to say to you now that I never dreamed that this was going to lead to a kind of an activist role. I thought this was pulling the material together and doing those things which for years had been done in the government. This is not the first President who's been concerned about leaks. That's been a kind of an endemic and chronic concern in the White House ever since I can remember.

SENATOR TALMADGE: Didn't J. Edgar Hoover have a reputation for running a pretty tight ship?

HELMS: He did.

SENATOR TALMADGE: And an efficient organization.

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR TALMADGE: And anything relating to a domestic activity, the FBI normally handled.

HELMS: They did, and he insisted on it.

SENATOR TALMADGE: And you insisted on handling the foreign activity.

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR TALMADGE: And you had a perfectly valid agreement between the two of you as to who would encroach on what activities or not encroach on them, did you not?

HELMS: We did, Senator Talmadge.

SENATOR TALMADGE: And it worked very well.

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR TALMADGE: And you think in the national interest.

40

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR TALMADGE: Now, when they requested of you that you do this psychological profile of Dr. Ellsberg, how could such a profile be made if psychiatric records were not obtained?

HELMS: Well, sir, there's a question of terminology, Senator Talmadge, about this. The psychological profiles which the agency had been doing on foreign individuals were not based on psychiatric records, they were based on general intelligence information, and from this information and from interviews and things of that kind, all this material was put together and an effort was made to draw a profile of this man as to what kind of a human being he was. But there was never implicit in this ever that you had to have psychiatric material in order to do it.

SENATOR TALMADGE: In other words, you didn't have to put him on the couch.

HELMS: No, sir. And none of them ever were put on the couch.

SENATOR TALMADGE: I believe you testified that the only involvement the CIA had in this entire operation was to provide a tape recorder and a camera to Mr. Young.

HELMS: Sir, that was to Mr. Hunt.

SENATOR TALMADGE: Mr. Hunt. And that was done at a request from Mr. Ehrlichman?

HELMS: My recollection of how that happened was -- and General Cushman, I believe, will be here shortly and, you know, can clarify this specifically. It was my impression that Mr. Hunt came to see General Cushman and asked him for these things, having been sponsored by Mr. Ehrlichman.

SENATOR TALMADGE: Is it your understanding, over the years, that when an assistant to the President of the United States or the chief of staff of the President of the United States or the counsel to the President or security adviser to the President requests information or materials or equipment from the CIA that this request is from the President?

HELMS: Well, this is implicit in it, sir. And Presidents have tended in recent years to operate through these principal assistants because they can't be on the telephone all the time themselves, and one gets used to this course of dealing.

SENATOR TALMADGE: And if you would have thought otherwise, it wouldn't have been complied with.

HELMS: That's right.

SENATOR TALMADGE: Thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador.

[Laughter]

SENATOR BAKER: Obviously the result would not bear that out, but you see what I'm searching for, whether or not he was in fact proficient, notwithstanding that his performance was not proficient.

HELMS: That was not his function in the agency, as I ever recall it, to do this kind of thing.

SENATOR BAKER: When did Mr. McCord leave the employ of the CIA?

HELMS: In 1970. I've forgotten in what month he retired, perfectly legitimately.

SENATOR BAKER: It was a normal, ordinary retirement from the CIA.

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR BAKER: At his request?

HELMS: As far as I know.

SENATOR BAKER: What about Mr. Hunt? I believe your testimony is that he worked for the agency for fifteen years, approximately. Did you know him?

HELMS: ...I just don't exactly remember how many years.

SENATOR BAKER: Anyway, for a significant length of time.

HELMS: I did know him. Yes, sir.

SENATOR BAKER: How well did you know him?

HELMS: I knew him relatively well because he and I, over many years, worked in the same general section of the agency.

SENATOR BAKER: What was his responsibility at the agency?

HELMS: Well, as I replied to Senator Gurney, he had a variety of assignments, and I would plead with you to simply ask the agency to give you the employment record because I don't recall it. I do recall that he had an assignment in connection with the operations leading up to the Bay of Pigs. I do recall that.

SENATOR BAKER: Can you describe for us what sort of activity he had in the Bay of Pigs operation?

HELMS: I think he had to do with certain aspects of

44

the propaganda in connection with it, the propaganda against the Cuban government, the Castro government.

SENATOR BAKER: This was a CIA operation.

HELMS: Yes.

SENATOR BAKER: And this would have been in the early '60s, I believe.

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR BAKER: Was Mr. Hunt familiar with electronic surveillance and surreptitious entry?

HELMS: I honestly don't know.

SENATOR BAKER: Mr. Hunt, I believe, was on the payroll in some capacity with the CIA. Was he an employee or a contractor?

HELMS: He was an employee.

SENATOR BAKER: And I believe you indicated the...

HELMS: Staff employee is what we call them.

SENATOR BAKER: And that continued through shortly after June 17th, 1972.

HELMS: No. He retired and went to work in Washington for somebody else, and he retired sometime in 1970.

SENATOR BAKER: Now, Mr. Hunt was not 62 or 65. Did he retire on disability?

HELMS: No, sir. He retired because he was anxious to make more money than he can make in the government. He had had some financial problems due to the fact that a daughter had been in a bad accident and had developed some illnesses, I believe physical as well as psychiatric, but he had run up a lot of doctors' bills, and he had a suit in connection with this accident, and I believe he was looking for an opportunity to make more money than he could with the government.

SENATOR BAKER: Was Mr. Liddy ever employed by the CIA?

HELMS: No, sir.

SENATOR BAKER: Or have any connection with it?

HELMS: Well, that having any connection with, I've found, is very dangerous. I have to watch myself about this. I was never aware of any connection that he had with the agency.

SENATOR BAKER: Did anyone ever inquire of you whether Liddy had any relationship to the CIA?

HELMS: Well, I've been asked this at various times, and I've given the same answer that I have to you.

SENATOR BAKER: Yes. I'm not really trying to establish so much that he did or did not have a relationship, as I am trying to establish whether or not an inquiry was made, particularly by the White House staff or someone connected with the investigation of the Watergate subsequent to June 17th.

HELMS: I was never aware of any inquiry.

SENATOR BAKER: All right. What about Mrs. Hunt?

HELMS: Somewhere in the dimness of my recollection -- could we consult the actual employment records. It seems to me that Mrs. Hunt was at one time employed by the agency, before she married him or something. I'm not sure about that.

SENATOR BAKER: There's been published speculation to the effect that Mrs. Hunt was very closely involved with the CIA and possibly the superior of her husband, Mr. Hunt. Could you give me any insight into that?

HELMS: Well, that's not true.

SENATOR BAKER: Okay.

HELMS: Wasn't she employed in some embassy here in Washington in recent years, before she died?

SENATOR BAKER: I don't really think that may be mutually exclusive, Mr. Helms.

HELMS: Well, it is. I want to make that clear. It is.

SENATOR BAKER: Perfectly clear.

HELMS: Perfectly clear.

[Laughter]

SENATOR BAKER: But you have some dim recollection that Mrs. Hunt may at one time have been employed by the CIA, but you commend to us the check of the CIA records.

HELMS: I would appreciate it if you would do that.

SENATOR BAKER: Mr. Chairman, I ask that that be done by staff. What about Mr. Barker? I believed you testified that he had some relationship to the CIA?

HELMS: But that was a contractual relationship, and I believe was in the early '60s, during the time when there was a great deal of activity in Florida over Cuban operations. I believe he was terminated in the middle '60s, and I don't believe there was any relationship with him after that time.

SENATOR BAKER: Did you know Mr. Barker?

HELMS: No.

SENATOR BAKER: Mr. Sturgis?

HELMS: No. I don't know him either.

SENATOR BAKER: Was he employed at one time by the CIA?

HELMS: In your files, Senator Baker, there's the testimony, which is classified, that I gave on February 7th before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in which I discussed all these gentlemen, and I was much better up to speed about their relationships at that time than I am now, and if you would mind consulting that record, I would accept it.

SENATOR BAKER: Mr. Chairman, in that respect, I would propose something, that the testimony of this witness and others before the Committee on Foreign Relations, taken on May 17th, 1973, March 6th, 1973, and the Committee on Appropriations on May 16th, 1973, and there's one other one. Which one is that? On February 7th, 1973 -- be incorporated in the files and records of the committee, with leave of the committee to decide what portions of that transcript may be excerpted for inclusion in the record, as appropriate.

SENATOR ERVIN: If there's no objection, that will be done.

SENATOR BAKER: Mr. Martinez worked for the CIA, and I believe he's the one who was taken off the payroll shortly after June 17th, 1972. Did you know Mr. Martinez?

HELMS: No, sir.

SENATOR BAKER: Is he the only one who was taken off the payroll after June 17th?

HELMS: There were none others on it.

SENATOR BAKER: Well, I guess the answer is yes.

HELMS: Yes.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you. And Mr. Martinez was receiving a hundred dollars a month.

HELMS: That's my recollection, but that's in the February

7th testimony.

SENATOR BAKER: Well, I won't burden the record further with inquiry in that respect.

SENATOR BAKER: According to my understanding of the summary of the staff interviews with you, Mr. Helms, these things appear. And I'll go through them, if you don't mind, and stop as you may request, or you may comment on them after I finish.

On July 7th, 1971, General Cushman received a call from Ehrlichman advising that Hunt, a former CIA employee, had been added to the security office at the White House. This information was passed on by Cushman to you on July 8th.

HELMS: Senator Baker, the only -- I interrupt only to say that I had never heard that he had been added to the security office at the White House. I just heard that he'd been employed by the White House. I don't know whether they have a security office.

SENATOR BAKER: Yes, but in any event, someone thought to notify the agency that a former employee of the CIA had been added to the White House staff.

HELMS: Yes.

SENATOR BAKER: So it was clear that someone at the White House knew that this man was a former CIA agent.

HELMS: Yes. I can only assume that.

SENATOR BAKER: And on July 22nd, according to our information -- and this I understand to be based on a summary of your interview with the staff -- on July 22nd, Hunt visited General Cushman and requested the agency, the CIA, to furnish him with identification documents, an alias, and physical disguises. Are you aware of that?

HELMS: Yes, I am because I've seen a document recording that meeting.

SENATOR BAKER: And they were supplied.

HELMS: Yes, yes.

SENATOR BAKER: Was there any protest to the supplying of this material to Mr. Hunt?

HELMS: Well, as I testified earlier, when I was informed of this, somewhat later, some of the items you mentioned, I don't recall having been told that he'd been given, and it was the tape recorder and the camera that I recall having been told about, and that's what sticks in my memory.

SENATOR BAKER: Have you later learned, on good authority, particularly from agency authority, that Hunt requested and received bogus identification documents, an alias and a physical disguise?

HELMS: Yes. That was a voice-changer, wasn't it?
And a wig.

SENATOR BAKER: I was coming to that. Then on several occasions, Hunt met with CIA people and received further alias documentation, specifically the name of Edward Joseph Warren, disguise material, which I believe may have included a wig, a speech-alteration device, which some of use would devoutly wish for, a recorder in a typewriter case, and a camera in a tobacco pouch.

HELMS: I have learned that that was what he was given.

SENATOR BAKER: And all those things were requested of Hunt of the CIA, and CIA supplied them, and this postdate of the time when you were notified this former CIA agent was going to work for the White House.

HELMS: Yes.

SENATOR BAKER: Was Mr. Liddy present, did you know or have you since learned, on more than one of these meetings, and receive similar disguises and alias documentation, especially in the name of George F. Leonard, at Mr. Hunt's request?

HELMS: Senator Baker, I've never met Mr. Liddy. I don't know Mr. Liddy.

SENATOR BAKER: Did you receive this information?

HELMS: I was given this information in May of this year.

SENATOR BAKER: By CIA people?

HELMS: Yes. Is it not true that at the time that this material was given to Mr. Liddy, it was given to him under an alias?

SENATOR BAKER: I believe under the name of George F. Leonard.

HELMS: That may be.

SENATOR BAKER: But I understand the name of George F. Leonard, together with the alias documentation, with supplied by CIA.

HELMS: Yes. My only point was that at the time, he was not identified, I believe, to the CIA people, as Mr. Liddy, was he?

SENATOR BAKER: I'm not sure, Mr. Helms.

HELMS: I didn't think he was.

SENATOR BAKER: He may or may not have been, but my notes indicate here that Mr. Liddy, at the request of Mr. Hunt, was supplied with an alias, to wit, George F. Leonard, and alias documentation to verify that identity, by the CIA, and this postdate of the time when the White House had served notice on CIA that a former agent, Mr. Hunt, was coming into their employ.

On August 24th, Mr. Hunt delivered to the CIA film, which he had taken, for developing, and it was in fact developed by the CIA. Did you know or have you since learned that?

HELMS: I've been told that that was -- that occurred.

SENATOR BAKER: And the CIA delivered prints from those negatives to Mr. Hunt and kept file copies of the prints on negatives in the CIA records.

HELMS: I was -- I don't know about these events from firsthand, so what I may have been informed may not be accurate. I had thought that when the film was developed, the developed film was returned, plus the films themselves, that the only thing the agency retained was some sort of a Xerox of the photographs. The negative is not still in the possession of the agency, I believe.

SENATOR BAKER: But prints were.

HELMS: Xeroxes.

SENATOR BAKER: All right. Xerox prints. Some sort of...

HELMS: I say this, Senator Baker, only in the interest of precision because photographs that have been Xeroxed are not as clear as the original prints.

SENATOR BAKER: I agree with you. They certainly are not. But one of those photographs, we learn from another part of the record, was a picture, I believe, of Mr. Liddy standing in front of the decimated files of Dr. Ellsberg's psychiatrist, which was a rather graphic form of identification.

HELMS: I'm unaware of that.

SENATOR BAKER: But you are aware that some form of photographic record, probably a Xerox copy, of the photographs of the Ellsberg break-in were retained in the CIA file.

HELMS: Yes.

SENATOR BAKER: And that CIA received the film from Hunt and developed it.

50

HELMS: That's correct. But may I say that at that time nobody knew what these films represented. I've been told that since, too.

SENATOR BAKER: Surely it would arouse some modest amount of curiosity to see that, and I won't pursue that any further because that's not the point I'm reaching for, but on August 26th you were advised of increasing demands made by Mr. Hunt. He'd already made several which had been acceded to, the ones I've just described, but increasing demands from CIA for technical and other assistance, including that to be supplied with a personal secretary then located in Paris. Did you have personal knowledge of that?

HELMS: I did, and it was at that time that I spoke to General Cushman, as I've already...

SENATOR BAKER: Yes. That was, in effect, the straw that broke the camel's back.

HELMS: Yes, sir. You put it very well.

SENATOR BAKER: And you declined to go any further, and my information based on the staff interview with you, Mr. Ambassador, indicates that you were apprised of these facts by Cushman and that you told Cushman that Hunt had now gone too far and that Cushman should tell Ehrlichman that no further assistance would be afforded to Hunt.

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR BAKER: Cushman did apprise Ehrlichman on August 27th, and on August 30th Cushman sent a memorandum on which you wrote the words "good" -- or the word "good."

HELMS: Yes, sir. Would you please read what General Cushman wrote to me on which I wrote the word good. I think that makes...

SENATOR BAKER: Yes, sir. I don't have that in the summary staff gave me, but I've now been handed what appears to be a Xerox copy of a memorandum entitled, at the top, Official Routing Slip. Item 6 says Howard Hunt, and under remarks, with the date 27 August, 1971 in the left-hand margin, Quote: I called John Ehrlichman Friday and explained why we could not meet these requests. I indicated Hunt was becoming a pain in the neck. John said he would restrain Hunt.

And below that is the initial "C," I take it.

HELMS: Which was Cushman's initial.

SENATOR BAKER: And below that is the word "good," with the initial...

HELMS: "RH."

SENATOR BAKER: "RH." That's the document.

HELMS: A little hard to read, but that's what it is.

SENATOR BAKER: Yeah, that, too, is a Xeroxed copy. Mr. Chairman, this does not appear to be in the record. If it is not, might I ask that it be included now as an exhibit to the witness' testimony.

SENATOR ERVIN: Let it be marked appropriate[ly] as an exhibit and admitted to the record as such.

SENATOR BAKER: Mr. Helms, isn't it clear from all of this that the CIA, at whatever level, and you, to some extent, were aware of the fact that Mr. Hunt, at least, was deeply involved in White House activity with CIA support, as I and that you blew the whistle after a great number of things had already occurred?

HELMS: Senator Baker, if we go to July and August of 1971, I certainly was totally unaware of any illegal activity, any improper activity, or anything that would have raised the question about the type of thing that Mr. Hunt was involved in. I assure you there hadn't been any intimation whatever that there was any question of a burglary, there was any question of stealing anything, there was any question of his having committed any illegal or improper act.

SENATOR BAKER: I don't doubt that, Mr. Helms. I take your testimony the same way I do the testimony of every other witness. I start with the good faith assumption that you swear the truth. And I have no reason to doubt that, unless other and contradictory evidence is made to appear. But I don't suggest that I'm trying to lead you into a contradiction. I'm rather trying to establish a relationship of which the White House or the CIA would base its perception of the fear that CIA might have been involved in these things.

Now, let's see how that goes. We've got Hunt; we've got McCord; we've got Barker; we've got Sturgis; we've got Martinez; we've got two sets of forged identity documents; we've got a voice altering device; we've got a wig; we've got a camera and tobacco pouch; we've got the processing service for that; we've got the certain knowledge that all these things were discussed between White House staff and CIA staff. And I wonder if that doesn't lead us to the idea that when these people are caught that somebody would certainly say, "Well, what was the CIA involvement?"

HELMS: Well, Senator Baker, I have the greatest respect for you, and if those were the thought processes that have gone

through your mind, I have no reason to argue with them. I simply, a moment ago, was not trying to make a self-serving statement. I was simply trying to indicate that there has been a tendency, it seems to me, in recent times to have everything run in real time as though all of these things were known and had happened and that, therefore, I should have had the good sense to know this thing or that thing at a certain period of time. And I simply was trying to point out that this was not the case.

SENATOR BAKER: Well, I'm accepting that at face value. And by the same token, I hope, Mr. Ambassador, you don't think these questions are accusatory, certainly not of you, maybe not even of CIA, probably not even of CIA. But I'm trying to establish a set of facts on which perceptions might or might not be based, particularly whether or not an inquiry should be made after the arrest and the attendant publicity about whether or not the people involved were, in fact, CIA involved. I'm not saying they were. I'm trying to establish the validity of an inquiry in that respect. And I've not made up my mind on that point. I'm going to weigh that very carefully, as I'm going to weigh all the other evidence, and it's going to be February 28th before I state a conclusion. But your identification of these components is very helpful to me, and I am grateful for it.

Mr. Chairman, I'll conclude. I'm sure my time is over. But I can't conclude without saying that I think Mr. Helms, at great personal sacrifice, has agreed to appear before this committee and other committees, that his information has been most helpful, that his testimony has been forthright, I believe, and forthcoming. It may be that at a future time we'll require further information from Mr. Helms, but I hope not. He has a very important post to return to. But at this point, Mr. Chairman, I have no further questions.

HELMS: Thank you, Senator Baker.

SENATOR ERVIN: Is not the Director of the CIA appointed by the President, subject to confirmation by the Senate?

HELMS: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR ERVIN: Does the same thing apply to the Deputy Director?

HELMS: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR ERVIN: Now, inasmuch as these materials were furnished to Mr. Hunt in July and August, 1971 at the request of Mr. John Ehrlichman, is it not reasonable to assume that the White House knew that Mr. Hunt was engaged in undercover work; that is, Mr. Ehrlichman knew that Mr. Hunt was engaged in undercover work?

HELMS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I can only assume that if

Mr. Ehrlichman asked that Mr. Hunt be helped -- I realize that in this life assumptions are very dangerous -- one would have assumed that he'd asked for this help for some reason, and he must have known what the reason was, or, at least, I would've assumed that he would have known what the reason is. But I can't prove it, and I don't know, and I didn't know myself at the time.

SENATOR ERVIN: Well, you do know that Mr. Ehrlichman requested it, that Mr. Ehrlichman was a very important aide in the White House and he requested this aid for Mr. Hunt. And also you know that the CIA put an end to the -- when the CIA put an end to giving help to Mr. Hunt that Mr. Ehrlichman was notified that Mr. Hunt had become a pain in the neck. So didn't it strike you -- when you learned of these things, didn't it strike you as strange that the White House would engage in undercover work on its own initiative, rather than resort to the use of the FBI?

HELMS: You know, Senator Ervin, at that time there was no intimation that this was even undercover work. What I understood Mr. Hunt had told General Cushman was that he wanted to conduct an interview; and there was no intimation that this was undercover work.

SENATOR ERVIN: Well, I hear that the wig -- that -- you didn't think that the wig was to improve the -- the appearance or the pulchritude of Mr. Hunt, did you?

[Laughter]

HELMS: I assume, in retrospect, because I didn't remember about the wig at the time, Mr. Chairman, as I have testified, but I have assumed in retrospect that Mr. Hunt wanted to conduct this interview disguising himself as someone else.

SENATOR ERVIN: You...

HELMS: But we didn't know that at the time.

SENATOR ERVIN: Well, when a man undertakes to disguise himself as someone else he's engaged in undercover work, isn't he?

HELMS: Well, we get -- we run into a definitional problem here.

SENATOR ERVIN: Well, you didn't think that he got -- applied for this voice alteration device in order to sing a different part in a choir, did you?

HELMS: Mr. Chairman, my problem here is that at the time that this was going on I do not recall having been told that he had been given a wig and a voice alteration device. I found that out in May of this year. So that this business of the -- of -- however one interprets undercover work or however one defines

54

it, no intimation was given to me at that time that Hunt was involved in undercover work.

SENATOR ERVIN: Well, we -- we've had some discussion here -- rather, some observation and some discussion that a lot -- that most of us human beings are sort of like lightning bugs: we carry our illumination behind and see better in retrospect than we do in prospect. But in retrospect don't you think it would be reasonable to infer that Mr. Hunt was engaged in something that might be called detective work, if not undercover work?

HELMS: Yes, in retrospect...

SENATOR ERVIN: Or covert activities.

HELMS: Certainly.

SENATOR ERVIN: Now, the -- the same thing I believe that you -- that Mr. Liddy was furnished some material under an alias, not under his own name, during this same period of time.

HELMS: I believe that's true.

SENATOR ERVIN: Yes. Now, in -- I believe -- you stated that when you -- you learned of the break-in at the Watergate, I believe, you were out of the country and read it.

HELMS: No, I -- I was here, Senator.

SENATOR ERVIN: You were here?

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ERVIN: I thought you said something about reading it in a foreign -- in an American...

HELMS: No, sir.

SENATOR ERVIN: ...a foreign language newspaper.

HELMS: No, Mr. Chairman, the question that I was asked which I read about was the break-in of Dr. Fielding's office.

SENATOR ERVIN: Oh, yes. That's right. I beg your pardon. I remember now. And it -- it just shows that even the chairman of this committee is not -- doesn't have an infallible memory for something he's heard just a few minutes before.

Now, after the break-in, when was the first time after the break-in you had any contacts with anybody from the White House?

HELMS: It was at that June 23rd meeting.

55

SENATOR ERVIN: Twenty-third? You and General Walters were requested by the White House to -- to come to the White House, were you not?

HELMS: Yes, sir. We were asked to come to Mr. Ehrlichman's office.

SENATOR ERVIN: And you had a -- a conversation with Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Ehrlichman...

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ERVIN: ...is that correct? And they expressed concern about the possibility that if the FBI continued certain investigations in Mexico that it might interfere with some of the activities of the CIA?

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ERVIN: Yes. Did they mention exactly what activities the FBI had in Mexico?

HELMS: No, sir; they did not.

SENATOR ERVIN: Was anything said about Mexican checks?

HELMS: Mr. Chairman, it is my recollection -- and I can only say my honest recollection -- that the first time I heard about any money or checks going to Mexico was later on the day of the 23rd when General Walters reported to me about his conversation with acting-Director Gray in the aftern- -- earlier in the afternoon. I believe it -- that happened about an hour and a half after we'd been with Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Ehrlichman. And Mr. Gray had mentioned to General Walters, as I recall it, that there was something about a check for something over \$80,000 that had showed up in Mexico. But this was the first I'd heard of that money.

SENATOR ERVIN: That -- that was on -- after your -- your visit to the White House but on the same day of your visit to the White House?

HELMS: That's right. I -- I don't recall Mr. Haldeman or Mr. Ehrlichman mentioning anything about money.

SENATOR ERVIN: Well, did they say anything -- did either one of them say anything, what specific matters gave 'em, the White House, concern about the possibility that FBI investigations might some way collide with a set-up of the CIA?

56

HELMS: No explanation was given, Mr. Chairman. And, as I testified earlier this morning, it was not possible for me to know everything that we were doing in Mexico or what the FBI might be running into, and I simply thought it was prudent to do some checking before I got assertive about this.

SENATOR ERVIN: Now, the Director of the CIA -- or the acting-Director of CIA is also a presidential appointee, isn't he?

HELMS: The Director and the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence are by statute presidential appointees and subject to the advice and consent of the Senate.

SENATOR ERVIN: And the same thing that recently -- been -- happened with respect to the Director of the FBI, hasn't it? Or has it?

HELMS: I -- I believe it has.

SENATOR ERVIN: Yes.

HELMS: I think that he now is subject to confirmation.

SENATOR ERVIN: Well, anyway, after you had -- you -- after you and General Walters had visited the White House and had a conversation with Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Ehrlichman in which they expressed concern about the possibility of FBI investigations in Mexico colliding with the poli- -- the -- the ac- -- work of the -- of the agents of the CIA, General Walters did receive a communication from Mr. Gray, the acting-Director of the FBI, concerning these Mexican checks?

HELMS: I believe that acting-Director Gray spoke to him in their meeting about this. I don't remember a communication -- I mean, a written communication.

SENATOR ERVIN: Did -- did the Director of the F- -- I mean, did Mr. Gray say anything about, express any concern as to whether the FBI operations might impede on the CIA in some manner in pursuing an investigation about these \$89,000 in checks, Mexican checks?

HELMS: Mr. Chairman, I honestly don't remember. But I believe that General Walters, who had the conversation, who I believe will testify here, might be able to clarify this for you, 'cause he was the one, after all, that was with him.

SENATOR ERVIN: Now, in addition to -- then -- then you or General Walters had several meetings or phone calls with Mr. Gray about this matter?

HELMS: My recollection is that during this period

57

I did -- I personally did not see acting-Director Gray; I talked to him on the telephone. It was only General Walters who visited with him and talked with him.

SENATOR ERVIN: Did you talk to -- to Mr. Gray about the Mexican checks?

HELMS: I never talked to him about Mexican checks. I talked to Mr. Gray on the phone about this Mexican lawyer.

SENATOR ERVIN: Ogarrio, or something like that.

HELMS: Yes, that's right.

SENATOR ERVIN: But he -- but you -- Generals Walters did report to you that in his meetings with Mr. Gray that Mr. Gray talked about the Mexican checks?

HELMS: Yes, sir. He did.

SENATOR ERVIN: Yes.

HELMS: But...

SENATOR ERVIN: And...

HELMS: ...as I recall this now, it was a sum in excess of \$80,000 on the check, but nobody ever explained to me at that time what this money was for or how it got there or anything about its purpose.

SENATOR ERVIN: Then after that time the CIA, acting either through you or General Walters, undertook to make it perfectly clear to Mr. Gray that they could -- that the FBI's investigation into the matters relating to these Mexican checks would not interfere with the CIA?

HELMS: Well, sir, what we made clear to Mr. Gray was that if by any chance they ran into any of our operations they were to abide by our long-time understanding and notify us.

SENATOR ERVIN: Yes. And that ended the matter as far as CIA and the Mexican checks is concerned, didn't it?

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ERVIN: Then a short time after that the -- Mr. Dean contacted the CIA on two successive days.

HELMS: Three successive days.

SENATOR ERVIN: Three successive days. And the CIA assumed that he was representing the White House, didn't it?

HELMS: Well, you see, Mr. Chairman, when he -- Mr. Dean called General Walters, General Walters was not acquainted with Mr. Dean. And since, I think, that somehow in the conversation General Walters intimated that why should he come down and talk to Mr. Dean, Mr. Dean said, "You get ahold of Mr. Ehrlichman, and he will attest to the fact that I'm authorized to talk to you." And General Walters told me he had reached Mr. Ehrlichman and that Mr. Ehrlichman had so stated.

SENATOR ERVIN: Yes. And then in these conversations, just in the interest of how I might lump 'em together, the first approach that Mr. Dean made was that he requested that the CIA pay the defense costs and the support of these five men that had then been -- that had been caught in the Watergate?

HELMS: Mr. Chairman, may I with great deference correct your statement?

SENATOR ERVIN: Yes, sir.

HELMS: These were feelers to find out if there was some way the CIA might do -- according to General Walters' reports to me, he was never requested to do anything.

SENATOR ERVIN: Yes. Well, Mr. Dean made inquiries of -- of General Walters as to whether or not there was any way in which the CIA could bear these costs?

HELMS: I think that's probably a good description.

SENATOR ERVIN: And then on a succeeding day, why, he made -- after he was advised by General Walters that the CIA -- that would be beyond the authority of the CIA and that he knew that you wouldn't countenance, then Mr. Dean returned and asked if they could arrange -- if the CIA could arrange bail for the persons arrested in the Watergate?

HELMS: I have distinct recollections -- and why this stuck so firmly in my mind I'm not entirely sure -- it was on the second day [words unintelligible due to technical difficulty] ...three sessions, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, and it was at the Tuesday session that these matters came up.

SENATOR ERVIN: Now, you stated that you did the best you could, and you did succeed in stopping any further advances to the CIA in this respect. And I presume that in so doing you were acting under the statute and pursuant to the statute which says that the CIA is -- has no law enforcement powers of a domestic nature and has no function in regard to internal security.

HELMS: But not only that, Mr. Chairman, but a trust

59

is put in the Director of Central Intelligence about the money that's given to him by Congress and there are certain understandings with the appropriations committees of Congress about what this money shall be spent for and how it shall be handled. And I was very clear in my mind about those. And there was nothing about this request that we could have accommodated within those guidelines.

SENATOR ERVIN: And that was made very clear to Mr. Dean?

HELMS: I believe it was.

SENATOR ERVIN: Now, there's been some examination indicating that perhaps you and General Walters had some discrepancy, there was some discrepancy of a slight nature in the testimony you gave before, I believe, Senator Symington's...

HELMS: That's right.

SENATOR ERVIN: ...committee?

HELMS: And the -- this -- this understanding was all hanging out there in the committee. I mean, this is just the problem of human recollection. And I realize that through these hearings, I was told by some gentlemen this morning, that people seem to have a good forgetory when they get to this chair.

SENATOR ERVIN: Yes.

HELMS: I don't pretend to be any better or any worse than anyone else. And my memory is fallible from time to time. But I'm doing my very best at all of these hearings to tell you what I remembered at the time. But -- and as far as the small disagreements between General Walters and I were concerned, when we'd talked it over and analyzed the conversation and reconstructed it, I have to admit I'd forgotten.

SENATOR ERVIN: This -- this is not -- the question I'm asking isn't any indi- -- intimation of any criticism at all...

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ERVIN: ...because I just illustrated myself this morning that my memory is quite fallible. And also that some other good men's memories are not -- and I'll [word unintelligible] myself out of the good men -- but there's memories of other people have been fallible. And the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John tell us that when Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, ordered the crucifixion of Christ, that he wrote out a title and had it placed on -- put on the cross. And people who have an opportunity to read something -- or where the thing is reduced to writing, I think it's more apt to be accurate than just what we hear. And it's rather significant that these -- the writers

of these four Gospels disagreed exactly what this title that was put on the cross said. The 37th verse of the 27th chapter of Matthew says that the title -- the thing -- the -- the writing which was put on the cross read as follows: "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." The 26th verse of the 15th chapter of St. Mark has a different version. It says: "The" -- "The King of the Jews." The 38th verse of the 23rd chapter of St. Luke has still a different version of what was on this title; and it says the title was "This is the King of the Jews." And then the Gosp- -- the 19th verse of the 19th chapter of St. John has a fourth version of the same words, or the same title, rather: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." And so I say that if those four good men could have different versions of the same words, it's quite understandable why you and I and other human beings have sort of fallible memories about things sometimes.

And the other thing I've noticed about the human mind, and that is this: that sometimes when something occurs at first we have a recollection that certain things were said and our memory does not tell us that certain other things were said, but when we hear the testimony of other people or sometimes look at a document, that our memories become refreshed and the things that were hidden somewhere in an unconscious part of our mind becomes fresh to our memories again.

And so I just want to say these things because I don't attribute too much importance to the fact that human beings don't recall all conversations and all -- even all written words exactly alike.

And I'd just like to say this, Mr. Helms. From the observation of the work you did as Director of the CIA and from the contacts I had with you, I think you did a -- a magnificent job in that capacity.

HELMS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR ERVIN: Any other senator have a question?

SENATOR INOUE: Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR ERVIN: Senator...

SENATOR WEICKER: Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR ERVIN: Yes. Sen- -- I'll recognize Senator Inouye first, then I'll recognize Senator Weicker.

SENATOR INOUE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Ambassador, in a response to the Chairman's question, you

61

used a word which intrigues me: "feeler." I presume feelers coming from the White House. When did you realize that the White House was feeling you out about the possibility of using your agency as a cover-up for the Watergate burglars?

HELMS: When I used, Senator Inouye, the word "feelers" I was describing what I understood was the way Mr. Dean put -- conducted a conversation with General Walters, which had to do with whether there was a possibility that the agency could provide covert funds to provide bail for the men who had broken into the Watergate, and also whether or not when they were convicted and sent to jail the agency would pay their salaries while they were in jail.

Now, according to General Walters' report to me, this was not a request of him by Mr. Dean; it was sort of postulating what could be done under the circumstances. And this is why I thought maybe a descriptive word [word unintelligible] would be "feeler."

SENATOR INOUE: Now, don't you consider that the suggestions being made of the possibility constituted a very serious departure from the statutorily prescribed functions of your agency?

HELMS: It would have been if we had in any way become involved in this.

SENATOR INOUE: That being the case, did you feel that you should have advised the two senior members of the House and the Senate, the chairmen of the appropriations committee of the House and Senate?

HELMS: Well, Senator Inouye, I didn't. And I don't recall having thought that that was an obligation I had at the time. I felt that my job was to keep the agency clear of all this, and as long as I succeeded in keeping it clear of it that was my job and my business, and further that these conversations were held in such a fashion that there was -- if I understood General Walters' report to me accurately, that to make the assertion that we'd been asked to do this would have been denied, that this was a possibility that was being discussed. But I don't want to lean heavily on that, please; I want to lean heavily on the fact that I was trying to keep the agency clean and that I didn't -- as long as I kept it clean I felt I was doing my job.

SENATOR INOUE: But whatever was being suggested in your mind was improper?

HELMS: The improper thing would have been if we'd done it.

SENATOR INOUE: Did you advise Mr. Schlesinger, your successor, of these feelers?

62

HELMS: I don't recall our discussing this, no. As a matter of fact, I had -- the conversations I had with Mr. Schlesinger when he came into the agency had to do almost entirely with operational matters and liaison relationships and things of that kind. I didn't get into these matters, as I recall it.

SENATOR INOUE: Thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador.

SENATOR ERVIN: Thank you. Senator Weicker.

SENATOR WEICKER: Mr. Helms, I'd like to -- Ambassador Helms, I'd like to, if I can, go back to the meeting of the 23rd, and I'm now using the transcript of the hearing, specifically that portion of the transcript which relates to Mr. Haldeman's recollections of that meeting.

HELMS: You mean you're now quoting from Mr. Haldeman.

SENATOR WEICKER: That's right. That's right. I think this is a good opportunity to try and not so much settle the question as to whether or not Watergate was discussed, because, to be candid, there was no question that -- that it was insofar as Mr Haldeman is concerned...

HELMS: Yes.

SENATOR WEICKER: ...and -- but, rather, what was said, I think that's -- that's what's important here; I think everybody concedes the fact that Watergate was discussed at this meeting, regardless, as -- as I say, of the slip of your recollection at those hearings. Nobody disputes that, either in your later recollection or in Mr. Haldeman's testimony before the committee.

Haldeman said: "So without commenting on either the accuracy of Mr. Walters' recollection nor your recitation of it" -- and he's talking to Mr. Dash -- because he's given a number of different statements and depositions in this thing that make it rather complex -- "but the meeting -- one of the purposes of the meeting as assigned to me by the President on the morning of the 23rd, one he told me to have, to have me and Ehrlichman meet with Director Helms and Deputy Director Walters, in addition to ascertaining whether there was any CIA involvement" -- and I put that as point number one -- "whether there was any CIA concern about earlier activities of people who had been arrested at the Watergate" -- I put that as point number two -- "and" -- three -- "was to tell the CIA directors that the FBI had expressed concern that -- as to whether there was CIA involvement or any impingement."

Now, he elaborates that. He elaborates on this in -- in the following statement. "Mr. Helms told me at the meeting that there was -- had no CIA involvement in the Watergate operation and he had so informed Director Gray. So I learned that at that meeting. I didn't know it prior to the meeting."

63

Now -- and here is what I'd like to -- to question you on as to what your recollection is -- we get into what he considered to be the main point. Mr. Haldeman: "Because -- and there seems to be a very difficult point to get across -- but because there were other items of concern. The matter, the question raised, was not solely the question of whether the CIA had been involved in the Watergate break-in, but also whether the investigation of the Watergate break-in, which was to be thorough and total, could possibly impinge upon the activities totally unrelated to Watergate and related to national security or to covert CIA operations, the activities of some of the individuals who had also been involved in the Watergate and had been arrested at the Watergate."

Let me just read that last -- last portion. "But also whether the investigation of the Watergate break-in, which was to be thorough and total, could possibly impinge upon the activities totally unrelated to Watergate and related to national security or to covert CIA operations."

Now, is that the -- is -- is -- is -- I -- is that the instruction that you recall? Is that the subject matter that you recall being related from Mr. Haldeman to General Walters? Or is it of a different nature? And if so...

HELMS: Well, I recall that he asked if there was any CIA involvement.

SENATOR WEICKER: Right.

HELMS: And I answered negatively.

SENATOR WEICKER: Correct.

HELMS: I recall, as I said earlier this morning, that Mr. Haldeman made some reference to the Bay of Pigs. I have referred to it as an incoherent reference, because it was -- frankly, in my recollection, I don't know exactly what he -- point he had in mind. But I reacted to that question very firmly. Now, "the Bay of Pigs" is the rubric for a very unhappy event in the life of the CIA; it's been a dead cat that's been thrown at us over the years ever since. And therefore it's one to which I am likely to react and react rather quickly, for the simple reason that the Bay of Pigs was long since over, the problems arising from it had been liquidated, I was well aware of this, and I didn't care what any investigation had to do with the Bay of Pigs; it could have gotten into anybody involved with it or without it or above it or below it, I didn't care. And I was trying to make this clear to Mr. Haldeman on that occasion. The fact that some of these people that broke into the Watergate had at one time been -- had relationships with the agency, including Martinez who had had them up until just a few days before, didn't make any difference to me. I mean, there was nothing that anybody was going to find out about investigating them that was going

64

to bother us as far as I was aware.

We then get down to the question of what an FBI investigation in Mexico might turn up. And, as I explained earlier, I did not have in my head all of our operations in Mexico, but, what was more important, I didn't know why -- where the FBI was investigating in Mexico; I didn't know who they were following, I didn't know what they were up to. So I regarded it as prudent to inform myself a bit about these things before I came down flatly and said let the FBI go ahead and investigate in Mexico, they'll never run across our operations, because this might not have been the case.

Do I answer your question, sir?

SENATOR WEICKER: All right. So that's -- that's -- what -- what then did Mr. Haldeman, to the best of your recollection, tell General Walters?

HELMS: The thrust of what I understood Mr. Haldeman to say to General Walters was that he wanted him to speak to acting-Director Gray to restrain whatever investigation the FBI was conducting in Mexico because it might run into certain CIA operations down there. And I've just explained to you why it was that I could not say on the spur of the moment it couldn't possibly happen.

SENATOR WEICKER: So...

HELMS: Mr. -- Senator Weicker, I'd also like to mention here, if you don't mind, something I said a moment earlier, that often the White House gets information about things that other people in the government are not privy to. The President and other people in the White House have a great many sources of information. And I didn't know what they had on their mind about CIA operations in Mexico at that point -- or might have had on their mind.

SENATOR WEICKER: Now, immediately upon leaving this meeting with General Walters, did you have any discussion with General Walters...

HELMS: Yes.

SENATOR WEICKER: ...relative to the discussion which had taken place with Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Ehrlichman?

HELMS: As I testified earlier, I told General Walters that I thought when he say Mr. Gray that he should point out to Mr. Gray that there's a delimitation agreement between the FBI and the CIA wherein if FBI investigations run into CIA that we're to -- they're to be reported to the CIA, and if CIA operations run into FBI matters they're to be reported to the FBI. And I thought that this was all -- the whole distance he'd have to go in his conversation with Mr. Gray. It was a legitimate request

that was made, because I didn't know whether Mr. Gray was familiar with this; he hadn't been acting-Director for very long. I wasn't even sure General Walters was familiar with it, because he'd only been in the agency about six weeks or so. So I wanted to be sure that these two relatively new people were not talking about what I thought were -- were talking about what I felt were important and legitimate things.

SENATOR WEICKER: Would it be proper to say that you were comfortable with General Walters going to Pat Gray with what you indicated to him outside of the meeting, and that you were uneasy if he had gone to General [sic] Gray with what had been transmitted by Mr. Haldeman?

HELMS: I accept that.

SENATOR WEICKER: Then one last question. When I asked you in the first round of questioning as to whether or not you thought you were being talked around during that meeting of the 23rd, and -- and -- and as you've testified I've gathered the pride that you have in the independence of the CIA, the belief that you have in the -- in the trust that is imposed upon the Director by the Congress, and I gather you -- you -- you certainly don't hesitate to express those feelings to this committee and I gather you don't hesitate to express them -- or -- or you didn't hesitate to express them to anybody else while you were Director of the CIA. Now, do you feel that this might have been one of the reasons why you were talked around at this meeting of the 23rd?

HELMS: Well, certainly that occurred to me. I had mixed emotions about this. Any sensible person, I think, would have wondered why I was not asked to do this. Various interpretations, I suppose, could have been thought up. But the fact of the way it was handled is in itself an unusual event. And General Walters, I think (he could speak for himself about this), thought that maybe they were asking him to do it because he was an Army officer and used to taking orders. Well, I've been in the government a long time taking orders, too. So that I think one was forced to the conclusion that for some reason they thought he might carry out the instructions more precisely and more fully than I might have. I just don't know. I've never been told.

SENATOR WEICKER: Thank you very much.

SENATOR BAKER: Mr. Chairman, I won't take long. I have three questions; and they won't consume very much time.

As I understood your testimony, Mr. Ambassador, Hunt was supplied with certain equipment -- I don't recall what you said he was supplied with -- but that it was not used in the Ellsberg burglary.

66

HELMS: Well, Senator Baker, this is the -- the point I was trying to make, that you read out to me a moment ago the equipment he was given, and I submit to you, as a highly intelligent human being, could you break into a building without equipment?

SENATOR BAKER: I don't know. But what I'm reaching for is, if it wasn't used for that, what was it used for?

HELMS: I don't know to this day.

SENATOR BAKER: Can you give us any idea whether -- were there other operations that required this -- this rather elaborate and exotic spy set?

HELMS: You know, the spy set was -- if you put it together, I think it's consistent with what the chairman was saying, that this would be the kind of thing you would want if you were going to conduct an individual -- an interview with an individual whom you didn't want to recognize you for who you were, in other words, under an assumed name for whatever purpose.

SENATOR BAKER: Do you have any idea what that might be?

HELMS: No.

SENATOR BAKER: We've heard testimony, I believe, from other witnesses that it's the practice of the CIA in the event that one of their agents gets into trouble that the agency takes care of their family and that sort of thing. Is that in fact the policy of the CIA?

HELMS: Well, for example, it is now public knowledge that Mr. Downey and Miss Defecto [?] were working for the CIA when they were captured, arrested, convicted, and put in jail in China. And during the period that they were in jail their salaries were paid just as though they'd been on our roll, so that when they came out they had a quite tidy piece of money to take care of them for whatever period of time they wanted to use it for; and we supported the families of one of them during that period.

SENATOR BAKER: Is the answer yes?

HELMS: Yes.

SENATOR BAKER: Do I understand the thrust of your testimony to be that the things I listed earlier about the wigs and about the camera and about the voice-altering device, about the psychological profile possibly, and a number of other things, were all done by the CIA but that you learned of all or most of them much, much later?

HELMS: No, I was involved in the psychological profile.

67

I don't want to duck that one.

SENATOR BAKER: All right.

HELMS: I authorized its being made.

SENATOR BAKER: Okay. What about the others? But do I understand that you learned of these things much later?

HELMS: Somewhat later. Because, you see -- if you find my answer equivocal, let me explain it. My recollection was that I heard about the tape recorder and the camera within the time frame of July-August, 1971. It's the wig and the other things that I did not remember having been told about at that time, which I learned about considerably later.

SENATOR BAKER: And to this day you don't know what those things were used for?

HELMS: No, sir. You know, Senator Baker, I want to explain something to the committee. I've been away in these recent months, so I've not had access to the newspapers here of the full testimony before this committee. This may have been explained many times in Congress, and I may have missed it. So that I'm not -- I just don't know.

SENATOR BAKER: Why didn't you, when you found out about these things, launch an inquiry into it?

HELMS: Well, quite frankly, as of the time that this was all going on, do you realize that at the time of the Watergate burglary there was no evidence that has ever come to my attention that this equipment had been used for any illegal or improper act?

SENATOR BAKER: Yes, but you knew it was outstanding. At the moment you found out this stuff had been issued or this support supplied by CIA did you do anything to investigate what it was used for?

HELMS: No, sir.

SENATOR BAKER: Why didn't you?

HELMS: Frankly, it didn't occur to me.

SENATOR BAKER: You knew a day after this happened that two or three -- four of your former FBI -- CIA agents, and one of 'em still on the payroll, was involved. Did you launch yourself an investigation to see what was going on?

HELMS: About the Watergate burglars, sir?

SENATOR BAKER: Yes.

68

HELMS: Certainly.

SENATOR BAKER: What'd you do?

HELMS: Well, we checked on all these people, their relationships with our people, their relationships to the agency; we went through all of that and turned all that material over to the FBI.

SENATOR BAKER: Did you go talk to these people? Did you pick up the phone and say, "What in the world's going on?"

HELMS: No, sir. We never talked to any of 'em, as far as I'm aware. After all, they were in jail at that time.

SENATOR BAKER: Well, that's right; they were. I -- I won't pursue this, Mr. Chairman. It -- it strikes me, though, that there were -- there was -- there were great indications -- and maybe hindsight is the only way we can look at this -- that there were -- there were great indications of a deep cross-identification with at least CIA personnel, CIA materiel, a past history of relationships with CIA, that you didn't know about it except for the psychological profile. And I can't help saying but the similarity between that contention -- and I do not doubt it -- by you as Director of CIA is remarkably similar to the contention of the President that he didn't know all about all these other things.

HELMS: Well, now let's halt a minute. When we looked into these various relationships of these individuals with the agency, we turned over to the FBI everything that we were able to establish about this. Now, therefore I assume that what you're saying is that somehow I should have gotten to these fellows who were in jail and asked them -- each one of them what he'd been up to. Well, it didn't seem to me that that was my function, sir. They were in the hands of the law enforcement authorities. The FBI was conducting an investigation; they were the proper authority to do this. And, quite frankly, I -- if, I think, I had intruded into this matter at that time, it would have been an improper act on my part.

SENATOR BAKER: That's almost precisely what Mr. Ehrlichman and Mr. Haldeman have told me.

HELMS: That may be, sir.

SENATOR BAKER: But you had people in the CIA that you later learned had supplied those wigs and voice-altering devices and cameras and processing equipment and aliases and forged documents. Did you go to the people inside the CIA and find out how come they did it and for what purpose? You say it was not for the Ellsberg thing. I am consumed by curiosity. What else was going on? What was it used for?

69

HELMS: Senator Baker, all of this is in your records. All of these memoranda, all of the inquiry of these various individuals in the CIA, you have it there. The fact is that...

SENATOR BAKER: Stacks of paper. No part of that record tells me what those things were used for, if we exclude the Ellsberg situation.

HELMS: I don't know what they were used for.

SENATOR BAKER: Well, what I'm say is, why don't you know? Why didn't you find out?

HELMS: Because I thought, frankly, that when these individuals had been arrested that that was the FBI's job.

SENATOR BAKER: And so did the White House. Thank you.

HELMS: Wasn't it the FBI's job?

SENATOR BAKER: Well, maybe it was. But I've used the analogy once or twice, and I feel a little ill at ease using it, if I had someone on my staff who was caught red-handed robbing a jewelry store, let alone the Democratic National Committee headquarters, and I read about it in the newspaper then or later, I have a hunch that I would have jumped up and down and screamed until I found out what happened.

HELMS: I have no reason to question that you might've, sir.

SENATOR BAKER: But I have no reason to question that you might've, too. And that's why I'm asking why you didn't, because I have a great admiration for you, Mr. Helms. I think you are an extraordinary citizen. I think you've done extraordinary service for your country.

HELMS: You know, I'd like to be worthy of your comments, Senator Baker; and I trust that I am. But at the time that these men were arrested, it did not seem to me that it was the proper thing for me to get into that affair as to why they had been arrested or their past.

SENATOR BAKER: It just didn't seem like a big event at the time?

HELMS: No, it was a -- it was a big event, but it did not seem to me that it was a proper job for me to undertake to investigate how they'd gotten there or why they'd been arrested.

SENATOR BAKER: All right. Lest I be misunderstood, Mr. Helms, I -- Mr. Ambassador, I now continue to have -- and nothing I've asked you by way of testing the situation by your

70

evidence should imply anything to the contrary -- I continue to have an enormous respect and admiration for you for what you've done and what you will do. And I appreciate your testimony. Thank you.

HELMS: Thank you.

SENATOR ERVIN: One -- one question. Couldn't you have -- couldn't you have reached -- or did you draw the conclusion that if you had undertaken to investigate the burglarizing of the Watergate that that would have been inconsistent with the prohibition of the act under which you operate that you haven't -- the CIA has no function in respect to internal security?

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR BAKER: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm not talking about that. I'm -- I'm talking about investigating his own staff within his own organization. And that certainly doesn't violate any domestic security prohibition.

SENATOR ERVIN: No. But -- but didn't you testify that you did investigate inside of the CIA...

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ERVIN: ...and turned over the information to the FBI?

HELMS: And -- yes, sir, and also you have it in the records of this committee.

SENATOR ERVIN: Any further questions?

SENATOR WEICKER: [Words unintelligible] because an analogy has been drawn and I think it is proper to pursue it. On June 17, 1972, was Mr. Hunt a member of the CIA, a part of the CIA?

HELMS: No, he was not, Senator.

SENATOR WEICKER: Was Mr. Liddy a part of the CIA?

HELMS: No, Senator Weicker.

SENATOR WEICKER: Was Mr. Barker a part of the CIA?

HELMS: No, Senator.

SENATOR WEICKER: Was Mr. McCord a part of the CIA?

HELMS: No, sir.

SENATOR WEICKER: Was Mr. -- now -- Martinez a part

of the CIA?

HELMS: Mr. Martinez was getting a retainer of \$100 a month on a fiduciary relationship; he was not a staff employee of the CIA.

SENATOR WEICKER: Which -- which operation was down in Florida insofar as screening those persons coming over from Cuba and ascertaining as to whether or not they should be -- would be -- have an intelligence value?

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR WEICKER: Mr. Sturgis -- was he a member of the CIA?

HELMS: No, sir, not at that time.

SENATOR WEICKER: And Mr. Gonzalez, was he a member of the CIA?

HELMS: No, sir.

SENATOR WEICKER: Mr. Baldwin -- was he a member of the CIA?

HELMS: No, sir.

SENATOR WEICKER: Mr. Barker -- was he a member of the CIA?

HELMS: No, sir.

SENATOR WEICKER: So apparently the only member of the CIA in all of these matters on June 17, 1972, was Mr. Martinez, who was on a \$100 retainer down in Florida relevant to the screening of Cuban exiles?

HELMS: That's correct, Senator Weicker.

SENATOR WEICKER: And did you -- did you turn over the records of these men to the FBI?

HELMS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR WEICKER: When?

HELMS: As soon as -- well, I don't know the precise date...

SENATOR WEICKER: Right.

HELMS: ...but the FBI started inquiring of the agency about the backgrounds of these men as soon as these men had been

72

arrested and we started providing the information from that day.

SENATOR WEICKER: I have no further questions.

THOMPSON: I can't -- if -- if -- if I understand the analogy, and I'm not sure that I do, but perhaps your idea is in that because these were former CIA employees and not present CIA employees, that that some way would relieve you of the responsibility you might otherwise have. Is that a fair...

HELMS: Yes, I think so. I think, Mr. Thompson, that I should make it clear, because I was asked at another hearing one time, when an individual resigns or retires from the CIA that's the end of his identification with the agency as far as we're concerned. Certainly under American laws one has no way of keeping a string on people like this.

THOMPSON: Uh-huh.

HELMS: So when they walk out the door and they turn in their badge, then their employment with the agency is finished -- unless some sort of a contractual or fiduciary relationship is established with them. This was not the case with these others except for Martinez.

THOMPSON: Well, I -- I can see that. And as long as we're talking about analogies, I'm not reaching any conclusion but just really thinking aloud, by the same token there were no present White House employees involved in the break-in, either. They were also former employees. So if we have an analogy, I imagine that analogy still holds up.

Thank you.

SENATOR ERVIN: We -- we'll be back at two o'clock. We'll recess till two o'clock. [Senator Ervin's next remarks are lost in the general hubbub. Then he raps the gavel.]

*

*

*

SENATOR ERVIN: The committee will come to order. [Words unintelligible due to technical difficulty] ...will resume the interrogation of the witness.

DORSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ambassador Helms, who was the normal contact from the White House to the CIA?

HELMS: Dr. Kissinger.

DORSEN: Was there much contact between Mr. Ehrlichman or Mr. Haldeman and the CIA?

73

HELMS: There was some -- of course, not nearly as much. There was more with Mr. Ehrlichman than there was with Mr. Haldeman.

DORSEN: Can you give some -- give us some idea of the number of contacts between Mr. Ehrlichman and the CIA during the time you were Director?

HELMS: That would be difficult, Mr. Counsel, because I don't know any way to come up with the statistic. I suppose that I've had a dozen or so contacts with him myself over a period of three or four years.

DORSEN: And were many of these requests for information or requests that the CIA do something?

HELMS: Well, there were a variety of things. There were meetings that I attended that Mr. Ehrlichman called. I recall one particular activity. When the White House was redoing the method of classification of documents and devising some new procedures for declassifying documents, there were some meetings in order to rewrite these regulations, and I remember attending at least one -- it may have been two.

DORSEN: Now, in connection with the request in July of 1971 for the CIA to furnish support for Mr. Hunt, it is your understanding, is it not, that Mr. Ehrlichman contacted General Cushman? Is that correct?

HELMS: That was my distinct impression.

DORSEN: And in June of 1972, when you were at the meeting in Mr. Ehrlichman's office, am I correct that it was Mr. -- it was General Walters who was asked to go to Patrick Gray by Mr. Ehrlichman?

HELMS: He was asked by Mr. Haldeman.

DORSEN: Excuse me. By Mr. Haldeman.

HELMS: Yes.

DORSEN: Did you make any connection, then or subsequently, concerning the fact that the two deputies who were asked to participate in the fashion described were both military men?

HELMS: Well, I didn't whether it had to do with the fact they were military men or they were particular appointees of this administration or just exactly whether they were old friends and therefore it seemed to be easier to deal with them. I really don't know which of these considerations loomed the largest.

DORSEN: Now, were you aware prior to the May 22,

74

1972, announcement by the President of the organization known as "the plumbers" or the fact there was such an organization in the White House?

HELMS: You mean the May 22, 1973?

DORSEN: Excuse me. '73.

HELMS: I'd never heard of a "plumbers" unit.

DORSEN: Were you familiar with an investigative unit in the White House?

HELMS: I didn't know there was any unit at the White House that was actively carrying out, if you like, burglaries or activist activities of this kind.

DORSEN: Now, with respect to the material supplied to Howard Hunt, you referred to the wig as a fairly famous item. Was the wig that was supplied to Mr. Hunt by the CIA the same wig allegedly worn by Hunt, the red wig, when he saw Dita Beard?

HELMS: I have been told in recent times that the wig provided by the agency was a brunette wig, it was dark hair anyway, and that some of the agency technicians rather resented the fact that the red wig had been tied in with the CIA because it was such a lousy fit.

[Laughter]

DORSEN: Mr. Helms -- Ambassador Helms, are you familiar with the memorandum for which there was a covering routing slip from General Cushman to you with the date August 23, 1971, on it?

HELMS: Yes.

DORSEN: Can we show the...

HELMS: Excuse me. If indeed -- this is indeed the memorandum that you showed me.

DORSEN: That's correct.

Did we show this?

And I'd just like to have you identify it, please.

HELMS: Yes, I am familiar with the memorandum.

DORSEN: Could -- excuse me. Could you -- I'd like the ambassador to hold this for another minute.

And is that memorandum, the memorandum in chief, if

75

I -- if I may use that expression, deal with the request of Mr. Hunt for the secretary to which you referred earlier?

HELMS: Yes.

DORSEN: And there's a portion of the routing slip -- is that a portion of that in your handwriting?

HELMS: Yes, there is.

DORSEN: And could you read the routing slip to us, please, including the portion which I understand is in General Cushman's handwriting and the portion that is in your handwriting?

HELMS: The part that is in General Cushman's handwriting appears first. It says: "FYI and guidance on how to handle." And then General Cushman's initial appears. My note back to him says: "If Hunt renews the request, please let me know and I'll speak to Ehrlichman about it" -- or, rather, "I'll speak to Ehrlichman at once." These Xeroxes are not famously good.

DORSEN: Mr. Chairman, with the committee's permission, I would like to have that received in evidence.

SENATOR ERVIN: Without objection, it will be marked appropriately as an exhibit received in evidence as such.

DORSEN: Ambassador Helms, this morning you were shown -- or it was read to you -- the memorandum dated August 31, 1971. And I'd like to show you a copy of that at this point. And to refresh your recollection, this is the one that deals -- well, which states: "I called John Ehrlichman Friday and explained why we could not meet these requests. I indicated Hunt was becoming a pain in the neck. John said he would restrain Hunt." It's signed by General Cushman. And you wrote "Good." Is that correct?

HELMS: Yes, sir.

DORSEN: I direct your attention to the last typewritten page of that memorandum and I read to you number three: "I told Mr." -- and the name is blanked out at request of the CIA -- "that Mr. Hunt's latest request drew us even further into the sensitive area of domestic operations against Americans and that all such requests should be referred to General Cushman's office. Meanwhile these requests should not be met." And there's a signature, the initials are ZZCI, which represents a position in the CIA. What does that paragraph mean?

HELMS: I don't know what this gentleman had reference to. It is signed by the executive assistant to the Deputy Director. And what he was referring to there I have no idea. I heard of

76

no specific Americans being involved at that time.

DORSEN: 'Do you have any knowledge of domestic operations against Americans?

HELMS: No, sir. I don't know what he had in mind.

DORSEN: In your conversations with -- excuse me. Mr. Chairman, this I believe has been received in evidence and copies were supplied this morning to both...

SENATOR ERVIN: [Remark unintelligible].

DORSEN: And each senator had a -- received a copy this morning.

Do you know what General Cushman was told concerning Mr. Hunt's operations?

HELMS: I don't specifically, Mr. Counsel. All I recall is what I said this morning, that when Hunt came to him and asked for this assistance he said it was for a one-time interview.

DORSEN: And do you know whether the camera that was given to Mr. Hunt was returned to the CIA prior to September 3, 1971, which has been given as the date of the burglary?

HELMS: I don't know. I have heard it said that the camera was not returned, but that's really hearsay; I'm not sure that that was accurate information. But it was somehow my impression that he did not return this equipment.

DORSEN: Well, according to the records of the CIA, I believe, the camera was returned but the recorder was not.

HELMS: Was it? But you have this in the records, don't you?

DORSEN: That is correct.

HELMS: And I think it should be in the records of the committee, because I don't think this should -- should depend on my memory. It's a relevant fact, and I would like to identify myself with what the record shows.

DORSEN: Very good, Mr. Ambassador. Now, earlier you were asked by Senator Talmadge whether you were asked by the White House concerning Mr. Hunt in terms of supplying a reference, and you indicated that you were not so consulted. What reference would you have given if asked?

77

HELMS: Well, that's a terribly difficult question to ask me in July -- or August of 1973 after all the evidence that's been brought forward. I think that what would have been in my mind at the time was to wonder why they wanted him and what his talents were that they wanted to avail themselves of. And I think my answer would have been largely dependent on what they told me.

DORSEN: Am I correct that in the last years of Mr. Hunt's service with the CIA he was given a somewhat different assignment than he had before?

HELMS: Yes, I believe that in his recent years there he was stationed in Washington, for one thing, and -- but precisely what his duties were at the time I don't know, but they were not particularly operational. But, as I explained this morning, he was having some family difficulties and so forth and he was trying to work these out as well as do his job and so on, so that I can only assume that we were taking these human factors into consideration and had assigned him at a place where he could accommodate himself.

DORSEN: Did a question arise at a later time as to whether in fact Mr. Ehrlichman had communicated to the CIA with respect to Mr. Hunt?

HELMS: Yes, and not terribly long ago. It seems to me that it was at the end of last year that -- and I would like to say, Mr. Chairman, that I believe that there is in your record a paper which will give the precise dates and details about these things -- but my recollection is that sometime in November, I guess it was, November or December of 1972, Mr. William Colby and Mr. John Warner of the agency visited Mr. Henry Petersen at the Justice Department, and I believe Mr. Petersen had Mr. Earl Silbert with him and perhaps two or three other people, I'm not sure who all the individuals were, and during this meeting they were going over some material having to do with Howard Hunt and the question came up about who had got -- who had arranged for Howard Hunt to get assistance from the agency. And Mr. Colby identified the -- the individual in the White House as Mr. Ehrlichman.

As best I recall it, some days go by and one day I got a call from Mr. Dean, who said that he had understood that it had been stated to Mr. Petersen that Mr. Ehrlichman was the man who had sponsored Mr. Hunt and that Mr. Ehrlichman didn't remember this and could there be some confusion. My recollection of the conversation was that I said I -- General Cushman was the one who had dealt with this matter and that I thought they could get the information from him. Mr. Dean then said he thought there ought to be a meeting to discuss this. And I said, "Fine. But be sure that you have General Cushman at the meeting."

Then, subsequent to that telephone call, a meeting

78

was called, in Mr. Ehrlichman's office, about this matter. I went to this meeting with Mr. Colby, since Mr. Colby had had the conversation with Mr. Petersen. And we found at Mr. Ehrlichman's office Mr. Ehrlichman and Mr. Dean, and there was the two of us, but General Cushman was not there. Mr. Colby was asked to explain what he had to say, and he did so. Mr. Ehrlichman, as I recall it, said that he didn't remember these conversations or this conversation with General Cushman. The meeting then ended up in a rather unsatisfactory manner, because the only person that could have been helpful in this was General Cushman. And at the very end, Mr. Ehrlichman said, "Well, why don't you have General Cushman call me?" He asked Mr. Colby to do this. And I verified that Mr. Colby was to call General Cushman and let him know.

Now, also -- if memory serves -- when I got that first telephone call from Mr. Dean, I believe I instructed Mr. Colby to tell General Cushman that this meeting might be coming up, so that he would be prepared for it.

DORSEN: Was there any reason given why Mr. -- why General Cushman was not at the meeting?

HELMS: There was no reason given that I recall.

DORSEN: And General Cushman would be the person most familiar with the question on hand, namely, who called?

HELMS: He was really the only one that could verify it.

DORSEN: Now, during the recess we did look at one -- more records and discovered that the first transmission from the CIA to the FBI occurred on June 20, 1973. Would that be consistent with your recollection?

HELMS: 1972, sir, if it was...

DORSEN: '72. I'm sorry.

HELMS: The break-in was in '72. This would have been.

DORSEN: Excuse me.

HELMS: It does. And it corresponds to my recollection, as mentioned in this morning's testimony when I said that as soon as the FBI started asking us questions about these people we began replying. So that would track very well.

DORSEN: With respect to General Walters memoranda, on the subject of how they represent your recollection as well as General Walters' recollection, could you please state to us again what contact you had in terms of reading them or speaking

to General Walters before he wrote them?

HELMS: Well, when General Walters and I decided that there should be memoranda for the record of these various meetings and conversations, if I recall it, he wrote several on the same day. In other words, he was catching up. He wrote the meeting of the 23rd. And I think he wrote his meeting with -- of Dean with the -- on the 26th and on the 27th. And there may be another memorandum. It certainly is all in your record there. But, in any event, he was writing them all to catch up. And then I began -- believe after that he began to write memoranda for the record as soon as he'd had a meeting, so this wasn't necessary any longer.

I don't recall how carefully I read these various memoranda, because he'd reported to me the contents of these meeting orally each time and I didn't feel at that juncture, as I recall it, constrained to read through every line to be sure that this was exactly what he told me; in other words, I was not distrustful of his record.

DORSEN: But you did peruse them to the extent of making sure that they were generally accurate. Is that correct?

HELMS: I think so, yes.

DORSEN: And before General Walters wrote each memorandum he had already articulated to you almost immediately after the meeting the circumstances of what occurred at each meeting. Is that correct?

HELMS: Yes, sir.

DORSEN: Now, there was some question this morning as to whether or not the President's name was invoked during the June 23, 1972, meeting. And I believe it's your best recollection that it was not. Is that correct?

HELMS: Yes, that's correct. General Walters, as I recall the language of the memorandum, said something about "it is the President's wish." I did not recall that language having been used.

DORSEN: When for the first time did you take note of your difference with the General Walters memorandum?

HELMS: I believe we discussed that even at the time as to just exactly how this had been put.

DORSEN: So that was one instance in -- where you saw fit to...

HELMS: I'm afraid there is a disagreement even now

80

between us as to just how this was worded.

DORSEN: But in -- in other words, you did discuss possible disagreements in the subject matter of the memoranda even at that point in time?

HELMS: I think he felt at the time that since this was just a memorandum to jog his memory and so forth that there was no reason to put down that we had a difference or to re-edit the language or redictate the memorandum.

It's very interesting, Mr. Counsel, that a lot of memoranda if one had known then what one knows now would have been compiled more carefully, the language would have been more judicious, there would have been a lot of things happen that shouldn't happen.

DORSEN: Well, we'll thank you for the memoranda that we do have, Mr. Ambassador.

Now, one question that I think is -- is quite important. I believe you testified that you were asked whether there was -- during the same June 23rd meeting as to whether there was any involvement by the CIA in the Watergate. Is that correct? Were you so asked at...

HELMS: Yes. I believe I was, Mr. Counsel.

DORSEN: And you replied, "No."

HELMS: Yes.

DORSEN: Now, before Mr. Haldeman turned to General Walters and told him to go and speak to Patrick Gray, was any question directed at you or General Walters as to whether further investigation by the CIA [sic] might uncover assets or operations of the CIA...

HELMS: You mean further investigation of the FBI.

DORSEN: Excuse me. FBI. Might uncover assets or operations of the CIA in Mexico?

HELMS: I don't recall that this point was ever put to either of us in the form of a question. It was my recollection -- or it is my recollection that General Walters was asked to go and speak to Mr. Gray about this because there was the possibility that it might run into CIA operations. I was not asked whether it would or it wouldn't.

DORSEN: Did you comment one way or the other at that meeting as to whether you -- whether you thought it might uncover such operations? Was there any discussion of that subject?

81

HELMS: I'm sorry, Mr. Counsel, I don't recall any.

DORSEN: At any time did the CIA announce that it was conducting an investigation into the Watergate?

HELMS: Announce that it was conducting...

DORSEN: Yes.

HELMS: No. You mean a public announcement?

DORSEN: Yes.

HELMS: No.

DORSEN: Was there any decision made within the CIA that there would be an investigation of the Watergate? Or is the opposite true? I'm talking about any CIA discussions as to whether there would be an independent investigation by the CIA.

HELMS: I'm not trying to be picky. We're -- we're talking about Watergate, now we're talking about the burglary, right?

DORSEN: I'm talking about the burglary, yes.

HELMS: There was no public announcement. We simply did as I indicated this morning; and that is check with the various people that had had to do with the burglary, check on their records, check with others that had had dealings with them, to be sure what their status was, and all the rest of it.

DORSEN: And am I correct that there were a number of -- quite numerous amount of communications between the CIA and the FBI and the Justice Department?

HELMS: Many.

DORSEN: And to your knowledge was any relevant information withheld from the CIA -- by the CIA to the FBI or the Justice Department, information that you were aware of while the events were taking place in June, July, or August of 1972?

HELMS: Sir, I don't believe so. Does the record that there was anything of this kind going on?

DORSEN: No, I'm not suggesting that at all, Mr. Ambassador. I'm just asking to your knowledge. I -- I have no knowledge to the contrary.

HELMS: Well, I -- I don't either. So -- but I just

82

wanted to be sure that my recollection tracked with the facts.

DORSEN: . Senator Baker -- Mr. Vice Chairman, I have no further questions.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Mr. Counsel. Mr. Thompson.

THOMPSON: Mr. Ambassador, did General Walters indicate to -- indicate to you between the time of June the 23rd and June the 28th that he was in any way concerned about the propriety of the request or order that Mr. Haldeman had given him?

HELMS: I don't know whether we -- he ever mentioned the propriety of it. I think that -- in fact, I am sure that we discussed why the request was being made. We'd been asked to do it: what was behind it? We didn't have the information to put together at that time. And I'm sure as associates would we were, you know, expressing wonderment to each other as to what was -- what this was all about.

THOMPSON: Do you know why, for example, he waited until June the 28th -- 28th to prepare this memorandum which we've been referring to, where he sets all these things out?

HELMS: Well, Mr. Thompson...

THOMPSON: Why wait -- why he waited five days in order to do that?

HELMS: Well, Mr. Thompson, I don't know. And -- but he will certainly be able to testify to that. But as I...

THOMPSON: You didn't discuss this?

HELMS: But, as I indicated this morning, I don't remember anymore which one of us was the one that decided, or whether we just agreed in the conversation together. After the request from Dean to the agency to provide bail or salaries for the breakers-in, or in-breakers or whatever they are, that at that time it seemed desirable to put some of this on the record because this was getting a bit far afield and into a rather strange area, we thought, and that these various meetings, then, ought to be caught up. And I think that's the reason that on the same day he did the several at the same time.

THOMPSON: And between the time of your conversation on the 23rd and the time he prepared this memorandum, Dean had contacted him three times, had he not? On the 26th, 27th, 28th.

HELMS: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, anyway.

83

THOMPSON: I believe that's right.

HELMS: Yes.

THOMPSON: So would you -- would you say by that time, then, that he had become -- he had become concerned about the matter and was covering his tracks, so to speak?

HELMS: Well, you see, Mr. Thompson, I'd -- I wish you'd help me with a point here. It is my recollection, contrary to what those memoranda show, that it was on Tuesday, the second meeting with Mr. Dean, that Mr. Dean made -- mentioned bail and salaries, whereas General Walters' memorandum indicates that that comes on the Monday, and because my recollection is that it came on the Tuesday, that it was after that that I -- we agreed that he should write these memoranda, and therefore he wrote the first of them on the very next day. I don't know whether his memory now that he's thought it over...

THOMPSON: You believe there is -- you believe there may be some difference between...

HELMS: Yes.

THOMPSON: ...the memorandum and the interview. My understanding was, frankly, that on the 26th that Dean had asked him if there was any way that the FB -- the CIA could possibly be involved and whether or not the CIA could -- could have been involved without Walters' knowledge; and then the following day, on the 27th, mentioning the witnesses involved and as to whether or not salary could be paid them and bail money could be raised, and on the 28th just this more general discussion as to whether or not Mr. -- General Walters had any -- any idea that -- as to how the matter could be alleviated.

HELMS: His memory may straighten that out now. I don't know. But the reason that I cling to my recollection in this particular case is that the question of bail and salaries hit me rather hard; that made an impression on me. And it was that which I believe motivated us to say, "You better start getting this in the record." And I think that happened on the Tuesday, which I believe was the 27th, and therefore he would have been writing these memorandum thereafter.

THOMPSON: Now, I know it's difficult to conclude what another man was thinking, but I assume you were talking to him from time to time. Might we conclude then that it was not so much the 23rd meeting in and of itself, but the subsequent contact with Dean that inspired him to put the matter in writing?

HELMS: Yes, I think that's right. It's a combination of this.

THOMPSON: Thank you, sir. I have no further questions.

SENATOR BAKER: Are there other questions of the witness? If there are no other questions, Mr. Helms, on behalf of the committee, may I thank you for your appearance, and, to reiterate, we have some appreciation of the inconvenience that it may have caused you. We are grateful for your testimony, and wish you good luck.

HELMS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the committee for its consideration.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, sir.